CARITAS AND REN: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THOMAS AQUINAS AND ZHU XI IN THE CONTEXTS OF THEIR TRADITIONS

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work contained here is entirely my own.

ABSTRACT

The thesis is a comparison of Chinese and Western, Confucian and Christian, ideas and values. Its central focus is on caritas as the primary Christian virtue, and ren (benevolence) as the primary Confucian virtue. The comparison deals eventually with the way in which these virtues are read by Aquinas and zhu Xi, and situated within their philosophies as a whole. Aquinas and Zhu Xi are in read in relation to their traditions, in order to identify the tensions and presuppositions that are incorporated in their work. Attention is also given to the problems of reading historical texts, and texts from different cultural traditions, both in terms of the hermeneutic issues at work in such reading, and the possible significance that such reading might have for contemporary culture.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

THE CONTEXT OF INQUIRY

> You will never know the truth, and you will read the signs in accordance with your deepest wishes. That is what we humans have to do. Reality is a cipher with many solutions, all of them right ones. Iris Murdoch, The Flight From The Enchanter.

> Man wanted everything to be simple, even if mysterious: one god - in the singular, of course; one form of natural law; one principle of reason in the universe, and so on. Astronomy, for example, held that the totality of existence was made up of stars - past, present and future - and their debris in the form of planets. But gradually astronomy had to concede that a number of cosmic phenomena couldn't be contained within its scheme of things. Man's hunger for simplicity paved the way for Ockham's razor, the principle stating that no entity, no category, can be multiplied unnecessarily. But the complexity that we refused to acknowledge finally overcame our prejudices. Modern physics has turned Ockham's maxim upside down by positing that everything is possible. Everything in physics, that is; the complexity of civilisations is far greater than that of physics. Stanislaw Lem, The Chain of Chance.

> Pax Britannica insured the intellectual triumph of the belief in universals - universals that could be circumscribed and tested, theorems that were defined as laws, realities that became imperatives. Just as British power and capitalist enterprise came to pervade the furthest corners of the world, so did the presumptions about universal truths come to pervade and define our consciousness, our cosmologies, our moralities, our scientific efforts.
> Immanuel Wallerstein, The Politics of the World Economy

1. INTRODUCTION

Perhaps all cultures tell stories about "others": about the gods and demons who differ from the humans in power,

the barbarians whose habits are different, the terrors of seas and deserts, the strange totemic vitalities of plants and animals. This telling can set the boundaries of safe experience: the others belong to realms that a culture chooses not to enter, or knows it cannot enter; they represent the dark side of the sacred, the scene of unpredictable energies, the place where the everyday - the light of mundane meaning and value - is threatened with extinction. But the telling can be otherwise: the other that is unknown or partially known can be perceived as eminently attractive, the locus of values lost or never before seen, the supreme object of desire engendering heroic quests and journeys where hidden powers are invoked as beneficent rather than feared as malign.

These themes, these ways of ordering experience along a major polarity of belief and value, are perhaps evident in a particular sense in primal cultures, undergoing a passage of dissolution towards contemporary residual forms. But it is their still present creative and heuristic power that I wish here to note, and subsequently to negotiate,their force in the minds and texts of those who would write about others. How, in this writing, is the force of projection, the mirroring in the other of one's own deepest apprehensions, to be acknowledged and circumscribed? For its mark in cultural history is too well-engraved to be ignored.

We can think, for instance, of Voltaire's elevation of

Confucius as the type of ideal enlightened rationality, spokesman for a purely ethical culture [1]; or of Heidegger's assumption of an original Adamic tongue uniting and founding the pluralism of languages [2]; or of the orientalism and primitivism governing the thought of Rodin, Gauguin and Bataille, as they locate ideal value in the mysterious East, the Edenic Pacific, the archaic Palaeolithic [3]. Here the moods of nostalgia, utopianism, alienation and rejection of the decadent West - drawing at times on a pessimism that sees history as decline - shape the work of art as much as they do intellectual inquiry. How, in their presence, can we judge whether the work makes its passage to the other, or stays caught within an economy of the same?

Some ways of handling the difficulties involved in reading the monuments of other cultures will be considered later. One argument might be that an adequate style of inquiry can only be reached after cutting a swathe through phenomenology, hermeneutics, dialectics, and structuralism, but I am not prepared to grant to method this primacy to free us from the circle of identity. O'Flaherty's use of texts of diverse provenance [4], and Derrida's sense for the hidden operations at work in any writing, come nearer to the approach I favour, though certain issues with Derrida might first alert us to one or two difficulties.

Of Grammatology addresses in part the reception of Chinese texts within Western discourse, and the

idealisation of Chinese writing that this could involve; it thus comes close to one concern of this study. But how are we to assess Derrida's opening claim, his reference to Western metaphysics as "(the only) metaphysics", a single tradition stretching "not only from Plato to Hegel (even including Leibniz) but also, beyond these apparent limits, from the pre-Socratics to Heidegger" (p.3). Or the reiteration of a similar point elsewhere:

> The entirety of philosophy is conceived on the basis of its Greek source. As is well-known, this amounts neither to an occidentalism, nor to a historicism*. It is simply that the founding concepts of philosophy are primarily Greek, and it would not be possible to philosophise, or to speak philosophically, outside this medium [5].

These assertions of Western uniqueness are neither self-evidently true, nor supported by the kinds of reading and documentation that might explicate and validate them in the terms of their assertion. It might be, on a certain definition of metaphysics, that Chinese and Indian philosophical traditions are judged non-metaphysical. Derrida does define metaphysics in a particular way - or, more precisely, shows how Western philosophy has been organised according to particular metaphysical oppositions since its origins. He also shows the contingency which gave rise to those oppositions, thus disallowing their necessity in favour of their historical constructedness. At the same time he shows the power of such oppositions by speaking of them as "necessary" (where he means "once established, then strongly determining"), and by tracing their operation in a massive range of different texts,

suggesting that it is only within a certain formation of twentieth century texts that that power is being loosened. But even here, in the breadth of his demonstration in the Western arena, he does not limit his argument by the serious consideration of counter-examples (he follows, for instance, Plato's exclusion of the Sophists, rather than attempting to show the power of sophistic wisdom in contrast with Platonic [6]). And he does not apply his definition of metaphysics to a reading of the Indian and Chinese traditions, thus neither allowing them onto the historical map of philosophy nor apparently appreciating that the structure of their terrain might lead to a redrawing of that map altogether. The ground here for reading and judgment on non-Western metaphysics thus still lies open for exploration [7].

2. COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY

This exploration is part of what I hope to provide in the work that follows. At stake specifically is an exercise in comparative philosophy that aims to be as much an exercise in reading as an occasion of substantive comparison. By that I mean that I intend to question the presuppositions of philosophical texts and categories, their historical sedimentation and the various strategies whereby they come to be constructed, as much as I intend to offer a comparison between ideas and institutions of different cultural provenance. One consequence of this is that many terms become problematic, and remain so in their

use. For instance, the word "tradition" readily carries the connotations of singularity, simplicity, the proper, as of a plant arising out of its own native soil and growing eventually to a fulfilment of the riches originally inherent within it. This reading ignores the existence of a past that is a site of perennial conflict, one battle-ground coming to be established upon another, change only arising from struggle and dissension and leading to nothing which might be called fulfilment. Here, bearing in mind this ravaged face of history, the word "tradition" will be opened to a number of different readings: instead of the singular, it is the multiple, diverse and contradictory that we will seek to foreground.

Our reflections deal eventually with two medieval philosophers, two systematic visionaries whose genealogies are obscured in the bright completion of their work, whose work is spoken of as a certain completion of history, an assimilation and organisation of prior diverse strands so that when they write it seems as if by way of recapitulation and as such a luminous instance of the one perennial philosophy (though different for each) [8].It is now partly to disrupt the normative force their texts have carried that I pursue this inquiry, betraying no doubt in the process aspects of my own previous and current fascination with their visions and intellects, with the otherness of their worlds that writing strains to capture.

(i) Aquinas and Zhu Xi: Elements in a Reading

Comment has been made that Aquinas and Zhu Xi are worthy peers - thus Joseph Needham, remarking that Zhu Xi has been likened to a number of Western thinkers:

> these include Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Spinoza, Leibniz, and Herbert Spencer, and it is a tribute to Chu Hsi that such suggestions have no absurdity about them. To my mind St. Thomas and Herbert Spencer are Chu Hsi's nearest equivalents, the one because he was, after all, a man of the medieval age, occupied with the the systematisation rather than the radical transformation or supersession of beliefs which had a long history behind them; and the other because he uncompromisingly affirmed a thoroughly naturalistic view of the universe. Needham 1956:458 [9]

At play in the equivalence and difference of these two saints and intellectuals is the play of cultures: different cosmic visions entailing different anthropologies and soteriologies, different weightings for epistemology and metaphysics, different regimes of life; and yet a similar priority ascribed to the intellect, meditation, writing, teaching, orthodoxy and its enemies. The study of these factors is at first sight enriched by a purity of conditions and substances aspired to in any laboratory: twelfth and thirteenth century Europe and China in the absence of any mutual cultural exchange, each with heterogeneous traditions of philosophy, religion, magic, science and technology. The force of this heterogeneity on Aquinas and Zhu Xi will be a central consideration.

But why these two men? Why systematic rather than edifying or disruptive philosophers [10]? Why yet another reading of great names and figures, a further consolidation of a proper uniqueness and heroism? Above all, why again

the past, the re-inscription in tradition, the re-reading of the ancients even if to tell them otherwise - in this age, where the possibility of a break, a rupture, a full uprooting from the past and insertion into the modern period is stronger than before [11]? Even if this century has seen a revived Thomism, a renewed immersion in the texts of Zhu Xi, can this be viewed as anything other than anachronism, a refusal to engage the upheaval of current change, a nostalgic retreat to the safety of idealised intellectuality? So that further work in this area is subscription to an escape. In the modern West we have our own systematic writers - Whitehead, Heidegger, Habermas - so why not engage here if system is a matter of concern? And why comparison?

Any grappling with these issues entails some consideration of the status of history if we are at all to register the force of the modern moment in its relation to the past. We can, for instance, recognise two different styles of reading the past, both of which presume the validity of engagement in historical study. A teleological stance, of the sort associated with Enlightenment thinking, might view historical development as the progressive emancipation of reason from the enchantment of myth and irrationality, and might suggest that knowledge of the ways in which emancipation has been won constitutes an important guard against the resurgence of atavistic irrationalisms (this stance is evident, for instance, in Habermas'

interest in the development and preservation of communicative rationality as the mainstay of social order and progress [12]). A genealogical stance, by contrast, in eschewing any notion of progress, might see the past as a field of power and repression and wish to understand the functioning of power today by recognising its previous formations, aiming to create, through this understanding, a revulsion against the urbanity of liberal rationality with its veiled use of power, and a struggle for the brief moments of emancipation that might be achieved (here we can think of Foucault's (mis-)reading of Nietzsche, a reading necessarily distanced from Nietzsche in the wake of twentieth-century totalitarianism [13]). I choose here between neither of these readings, but intend to incorporate the power of both, in line with some of the best recent readings of the past of philosophy [14]. The status of the modern, or post-modern, moment is something I will return to in the final chapter. All I would say now, in endorsing a historical reading as central to the conception of philosophy that this inquiry wishes to focus, is that consideration of the past, just as reflection on different traditions and cultures through the exercise of comparison, is a way of extending and enhancing the scope of thinking, thus constituting one vital strand in the fabric of contemporary reflection [15].

As we read we can consider the attractions of system. One of these is its promise of security, its promise to name all that appears within any horizon and to name the

horizon itself. This attraction can be all the stronger at certain critical moments, when new information and ideas spill over or disrupt the broad structures of categorisation that have previously been established, provoking a turn to a style of system-building which can constitute a form of ad hoc engineering. Such engineering can be variously seen in Western responses, from the seventeenth century onwards, to the increasingly diversifying sense of cultural difference. The rupture at the heart of Western Christian ontologies provoked by awareness of India, China and Africa awakened such different organising responses as Jesuit Figurism [16], Hegelian and Marxist teleologies of history [17], aspects of Heidegger's thinking, and the systematic presentations of phenomenology of religion [18].In each of these instances the concern with system, masking the element of power within it by emphasising the desire for knowledge and order, manifested itself as a concern with a common ground for all thinking, and commensurability between discourses [19]. The political and intellectual crises in Aquinas' and Zhu Xi's worlds also provoked their particular approaches to system, though it might be argued that "system" is too confining and totalising a word for the work they produced [20].

This will to knowledge as a will to power, evident in system, could, for long in certain contexts, be reckoned the mind's wonder at the multiplicity of being, a

contemplative drive that sought hierarchy behind diversity, the return of the knowing soul to the source of intelligibility. This strength of assurance is there in Aquinas and Zhu Xi - even a metaphysics of desire for knowledge is partly shared by them. To read their approach to systematic inquiry will be one way of deepening the issue of diversity in our own time, using their time and their distance as a means of focussing our own specificities. To do this is not to search for system - to search for a philosophy of philosophies that would link East and West in a shared vision - but to explore what might be at stake in systematic inquiry, and to open a space for comparative philosophy that rests in questioning rather than agreement.

It is clear that the past can serve as a buffer against the present, that one can attempt to live today in London or Paris with a medieval mind. One position might claim that the hermeneutic enterprise, the retrieval of older value systems and their reinscription within a contemporary economy, is a means whereby an increasingly inter-linked world bourgeoisie finds its security and retains its power. When for instance it is claimed that "Chinese history belongs to the world, not only as a right and necessity, but also as a subject of compelling interest" [21], then the problems of knowledge and power begin to come into focus. Speaking of the renaissance of non-Western civilisations (and the study of these civilisations is

clearly one factor in this renaissance) Immanuel Wallerstein remarks:

> Once having said that these civilisational renaissances are a principal sociopolitical phenomenon in the present situation, we are not much enlightened as to what this implies for the process of transformation. It could theoretically push in opposite directions. On the one hand, these renaissances may contribute to the institutional inventions that would inevitably be a part of the creation of a socialist world order. Since we need to rethink all of our basic premisses, what better way than to dip into the multiple wisdoms to which the world has given birth? On the other hand, civilizational renaissances may also provide the outer clothing for the logic of domination. Since what the world bourgeoisie needs is to continue the reality of inequality under new forms of more equal statuses, what better way than to dress in new exotica, renewing the world bourgeoisie with fresh elements? [22]

History, then, is a battleground for any contemporary thinking on problems of order and diversity - not here the liberal-humanist history that would give us poise and _phronesis_ from the lessons of the past, but Walter Benjamin's history where "every document of civilisation is at the same time a document of barbarism" Benjamin 1973:258. For us the writing of history is a re-inscription of lost elements that aims to be both genealogy and evolution, a reading of emergent tendencies that acknowledges the diverse values contained within them. In this reading it may be that there is space for a provisional philosophy of history.

(ii) Aquinas and Zhu Xi: Aspects of Their Work

Zhu Xi and Aquinas were nearly exact contemporaries, Zhu living from 1130 to 1200, Aquinas from 1224/5 to 1274. [Already in chronology part of the comparative problem

emerges: both men are situated within the trajectory of Christian history, absorbed into Christian teleology as the one historical order. The implications here are not insignificant.] Each was thought the major systematic thinker in his immediate tradition, drawing on the work of previous figures to argue comprehensively - Aquinas in the Summa contra Gentiles and Summa Theologiae, Zhu Xi in the Jinsi Lu (Reflections on Things at Hand) - the central themes and logic of Christian and Confucian belief [23].

Aquinas read Aristotle, reaching for a synthesis of Aristotelian metaphysics with a Christian theology previously structured and inspired by Platonism and neo-Platonism. Presenting an apologia for Christianity before Judaism and Islam, he argued a theology that subsequently became Church orthodoxy and that remains the major intellectual force in Catholic thought today. In this century his writings have been variously advocated, commented on and reworked by neo-Thomists and transcendental Thomists [24].

Zhu Xi similarly restated Confucianism. Central to the development of Song neo-Confucianism, with a critical stance towards Buddhism, he fought for a supremacy of Confucianism over Daoist and Buddhist values. His reading of Confucian traditions, figured in extensive textual commentary, was soon taken as state orthodoxy and functioned so until the final civil service examinations in 1905. With the early dissemination of his work in Korea

and Japan he fomented intellectual revolutions in both these milieux, and presides still over the texts and discussions of contemporary Confucian scholars [25].

The commentarial work of Aquinas and Zhu Xi is central to their philosophy and marks their complex relations with prior tradition. ["Philosophy" here is a broad term, indicating simply the intellectual corpus of each man. Aquinas was a theologian as well as philosopher, and aware of a difference in disciplines - though the form of the difference he identifies would now be questioned [26]. Zhu wrote poetry and history [27], Aquinas delivered homilies and wrote hymns for liturgical use [28]. In all this nonetheless their activity as philosophers is central, powerfully shaping other interests and concerns.]

Aquinas commented on the Christian scriptures [29], on the texts of Aristotle [30], on the Fathers Augustine and John Chrysostom [31], on the neo-Platonist Denis the Areopagite [32], on his earlier fellow-scholastic Peter Lombard [33]. He was a student of Albert the Great, the most encyclopaedic thinker of the age. Fluent in scholastic rationality and disputation, he made this potent across topics as diverse as ethics, sacramental theology, the nature of the intellect and the existence of angels. He lacked Albert's interest in science but achieved more as a philosopher. While interpreting the history of his traditions he did not have a concept of historical truth, but rather of the eternal truths of philosophy and religion

that could be understood partially in history, and fully in paradise. He saw faith and reason, scripture and philosophy, as ultimately in harmony, though the harmony was hierarchical: reason was approximate, a partially successful search for knowledge, faith and the Christian revelation were the fulfilment of that search [34].

Zhu was as much a commentator, though his range is less extensive. If Aquinas would include Aristotle within the scheme of Christian truth, Zhu sought to exclude Buddhist and Daoist values from his Confucian vision. He maintained that Confucianism had been eclipsed for 1500 years, that the true tradition, daotong, had been lost, that he was its

restorer; in this he is for some the founder of a new religion [35]. He canonised four Confucian texts - the Analects (Lunyu), Mencius (Mengzi), Great Learning (Daxue), and Doctrine of the Mean (Zhongyong) - writing commentaries on each [36]. He wrote also on the Shijing (Book of Poetry), Yijing (Book of Changes),on the poetry of Chu, Chuci, and on traditional texts on ritual. The leader of a neo-Confucian revival, he had Shao Yang, Zhang Zai, Zhou Dunyi, Cheng Yi and Cheng Hao amongst his major predecessors. He dealt with such crucial earlier neo-Confucian texts as the the Taijitu shuo (Explanation of The Diagram of the Great Ultimate) of Zhou Dunyi, and the Ximing (Western Inscription) of Zhang Zai [37].

Zhu thought his own teacher Li Tong too inclined to Buddhism; for him the Cheng brothers had best understood the Confucian dao. The truth of that dao lay in its origins, and in the eternal heavenly principles, tianli, that were constititive of the universe and of human nature, xing, and that were manifest by the sages in action. Whatever truth was available to individuals lay in extensive study, and in the progressively intuitive perception of li (principle) that it facilitated. Zhu presented these themes, and reiterated them constantly, not in the systematic structures of a Summa but in commentary and conversation: the vital part of his work is contained in the Yulei (Classified Conversations) [38]. He also planned a historical study that could constitute a moral

reading of the past and exemplify Confucian values; executed by his students, this work bore a central role in directing later interpretations of Chinese history towards Confucian evaluation [39].

(iii) A Structural Theme

Can there be an economy of excellence, or does its ardent pursuit not disrupt any economy: beyond the pragmatics of basic need the gesture of excess, the work not completed but perfected, the labour of a brilliance durable or ephemeral, the pleasure of the moment's intensity or the longevity of fame and offspring. What project governs the desire for excellence? And can we view it more positively than as ineluctable nostalgia and retrospective vision, the quest for a lost primary narcissism, displacement of an original self-love through the movement of differance [40]? And how might we link this desire with a Buddhist affirmation of sunyata that would reduce the force of desire; where here do we locate the powers of intellect and imagination?

Excellence in life and action has been variously figured: one well-used contrast would be between subordination to traditional practices accepted for generations, and the direct unfettered response of one's deepest inclinations (witholding for the moment here the problem of "naturalness"). For the Daoist Zhuangzi unlearned, unplanned action,wuwei, action that is natural

and spontaneous, ziran, is what is excellent. For Confucius excellence is manifesting the dispositions of the sages as these are assimilated through learning, xue, and ritual, li. For Plato, within the dynamism of eros towards the good, come definitions of particular forms of excellence or virtues, aretai, of excellence in its most general sense, arete, and a distinction between moral excellence and the technical excellence, techne, of the craftsman. The Upanishads indicate various quests for excellence, perceiving this as transcendence over suffering and death. For one such as Svetaketu the goal lay in assurance that the self, atman, was eternal, and that asceticism, meditation and an enlightened teacher were the ways to realise this. Confucius again dealt with excellence in the political sphere, with ways in which the morally upright person, junzi, might be exemplary in achieving it.

(iv) Excellence in Aquinas and Zhu Xi: Caritas and Ren

Aquinas and Zhu Xi cover excellence in part with discourse around two primary terms, caritas and ren. Caritas we know well enough as charity, a dilute term now, but expressive for Aquinas of the highest perfection possible, the transformation of life, through human freedom and divine grace, from imperfection to eternal flourishing [41]. Ren, usually translated benevolence or humaneness [42], is for Zhu Xi the counterpart virtue, as central to Confucianism as caritas to Christianity. Ren is part of the deepest structure of human nature, xing, but part also

of the structure of the cosmos, an innate principle of good in all things, and a capacity in each to work for the good of all. Ren is most fully manifest in the life of the sage, when the emotions, qing, are stilled and action is balanced, zhong, when the human mind, renxin, is the mind of the dao, daoxin [43].

These terms have their history, which Aquinas and Zhu Xi understood in a particular way. Each had a concept of orthodox transmission: Zhu's daotong is balanced by Aquinas' understanding of the role of church and papacy. Zhu, as noted, planned a normative Confucian history, the Zizhi tongjian gangmu, and if Aquinas did not produce such a work he had one before him, Augustine's Civitas Dei. In part we will be elucidating that history - not subscribing to the filiation of texts both men acknowledged, nor affirming the primacy of their scriptures, but seeking something of the permanently elusive horizon within which their discourse was set, the intellectual and religious moment in history that was their world, and the processes governing its emergence.

On ren we will take first the text of Confucius, and also the formulation of the two main divergent strands of Confucianism advanced by Mencius and Xunzi. We will also look at alternative traditions, alternative figurings of excellence strongly critical of Confucianism, that were presented by Mozi, Laozi, Zhuangzi and Buddhist authors. And we will look at neo-Confucian teachings immediately

antecedent to Zhu Xi. With caritas we will look at classical Greek and New Testament writers, since caritas is in part the outworking of two notions, philosophical eros and Christian agape. Cicero and Augustine, monasticism and troubadour poetry will also figure as we come to consider Aquinas; we will thus indicate some at least of the complexity governing these issues.

At first the approach - necessarily, and as a regulative principle - will be exegetical and hermeneutical in a standard sense: any passage towards the repressed element in these texts, to positions unsaid but indicated, can only hold insofar as it demonstrates the opening in what appears as a set of well-worked integrated positions. This opening of the repressed is already clear in some instances: Aeschylus for instance opens the complex play of forces instinct in the Greek achievement of rationality, and tragic drama in particular has been identified as the privileged emergence of the repressed [44]; Zhuangzi mocks the claim of any position to be consistent or incontrovertible, subjecting norms and values to the dissolution of humour and paradox. At the same time the posture of irony, of critique, potentially carries its own exhaustion, or solicits a mis-reading: Zhuangzi's void leave us shorn of projects and forces for decision, but is also easily assimilated as a form of naturalism [45].

To pass from critique to project via a critique of

projects may be finally frustrating, leaving us either in a desert without direction or in marshland where the ground sinks constantly underfoot. Certainly the question of ground, of foundations, is a central one for us, and at issue in our consideration of this will be any form of transcendental thinking. Aquinas and Zhu Xi are both strong foundationalists: the Summa contra Gentiles and the Summa Theologiae start with the question of God and proceed from there, putting metaphysical first principles first; in the Jinsi Lu and the Yulei Zhu opens with questions of taiji (the Great Ultimate), li (principle), and tian (heaven) before passing to questions of morality and social order. Differently as metaphysics is weighted by each writer, the common requirement is that the gound of departure and inquiry be solid [46]. For them the ground and foundation is taken as given, to be known by the mind through the force either of reason or revelation. For us the point will be to determine how the ground comes to be constructed by means of a particular play of categories; in rejecting the possibility of moving through and beyond those categories to apprehend the ground directly, we will be marking our distance from a foundationalist enterprise, whilst seeking also to understand its power and ways of operating [47].

Foundationalism and order link readily with universalism: when strongly adhered to, these constitute the aspiration to find a single unifying idea, to achieve an eternalism with a vantage point beyond the world, with a

view of things steady in their changeless essence [48]. (Even so, with Zhu Xi, when the stress on organic change is central to his ontology.) While universalism is particularly focussed in metaphysics, we will also consider universalism and the question of values. Commentators take Aquinas and Zhu, as these authors took themselves, to denote by caritas and ren constant and consistent dispositions, forms of moral and spiritual perfection the same for all individuals of whom they might be predicated, aspects of a moral order transcending background or context. But what of the functioning of values within hierarchies of power and knowledge? Specific social groups - to which Aquinas and Zhu each belonged - control, or can access control of, the apparatus by which values are universalised (writing texts, instituting academies, canonising a culture), and encoded in these values are strategies maintaining privilege and effecting subordination. Charity is one thing for the lord and master who commands, another for the servant whose existence hangs by the master's "goodwill". In recent debate Chinese Marxist philosophers question whether ren is a putative universal value, or one serving and sustaining (at least implicated in) the life-style and interests of a feudal aristocratic community [49]. Plato and Aristotle, living in a society which was compromised for Hegel by its continued maintenance of slave-ownership, present an idea of arete as universal virtue which obscures consideration of precisely who in Athens was reckoned eligible for the

attainment of arete.

A final theme. In the moral views crystallised around caritas and ren cluster exclusionary positions on women. The background is clear enough. Commenting on the subordination of women within Confucian value systems, Metzger remarks

> Given the sexist bias integral to traditional Chinese culture, many of the apparently universal traditional concepts about human life implicitly refer only to males, or perhaps better, to a mode of existence shared by males and females but attaining its fullest realisation only in the case of males. That a woman could become a sage was inconceivable to the typical Confucian, I believe. Metzger, 1977:237.

And observing how male philosophical traditions have presented interpretations of "human nature" in general, Okin comments

> "Human nature", we realise, as described and discovered by philosophers such as Aristotle, Aquinas, Machiavelli, Locke, Rousseau, Hegel, and many others, is intended to refer only to male human nature. Consequently, all the rights and needs that they have considered humanness to entail have not been perceived as applicable to the female half of the human race. Okin,1979:6-7 [50].

In China and the West male philosophers in joint discussion have specified human nature and its fulfilment; the functions of male experience work across all topics (with Plato even the midwife is incorporated as a male power). If ideally philosophy is the conversation of humanity [51], to date it has been a conversation between males. But if philosophy is - has been - the mind's search for truth, an intellectual transformation of eroticism, then there may be a sense in which, within a given economy of eros, it is

inevitably exclusionary (not simply different, acknowledging the power it deploys): "perhaps metaphysical desire is essentially virile, even in what is called woman" (Derrida,1978:321) [52].

3. A CONTEXT FOR COMPARISON

In China the unicorn, jilin, served from an early date as a symbol of peace and prosperity. It appeared in a particular locale when the ruler was generous and righteous. It was a sign of benevolence, ren, a cipher for paradise and utopia, its presence a mark of the kindliness and ease at work in human relations. It stands for the central virtue of Confucianism, though seems not to count specifically as the instantiating symbol or incarnation of the sage [53].

In the medieval West, through a complex symbolism of conflicting and contrasting tropes, the unicorn stands in predominant fashion for the power of God manifest in Christ, for the incarnation of divine charity. Tamed by the gentleness of the virgin, it forms with her the primordial archetypal balance of male and female [54].

The cultural parallels of symbolic function at work in this example would open for some onto the issue of a collective mind, archetypes present in the genes and rising from biology and instinct to effect a common architecture of experience, a world similarly human independent of any discernible transmission of values and ideas. Here the

parallel rests as a first curiosity.

Of more direct significance are the differences in the worlds of Aquinas and Zhu Xi.

(i) The Problem of Separate Cultures

To compare Aquinas with al-Ghazali or Maimonides, Zhu Xi with Dogen or Nichiren - each an important figure and roughly contemporary with the others - we have a network of beliefs, values, inaugural inquiries.

Aquinas and Maimonides had a partly common scriptural heritage; both had with al-Ghazali a shared philosophical heritage, Platonist and Aristotelian. Intellectual exchange between medieval Christians, Muslims and Jews was heightened by extensive trade, and by the Crusades, bringing a Greek and Arabic Aristotle to the Latin West and prompting the transformative translations of William of Moerbeke [55]. Troubadours who travelled on the Crusades came to know Arabic love poetry, intensifying their own chansons in the process, and formulating a "religion of love" around the themes of amour courtois [56]. Bernard of Clairvaux, in commentary on the Song of Songs in particular, transformed this poetic eros into an ecstatic Christian mysticism, at the same time providing an interpretation of scripture that was deeply influential in the Jewish world [57]. Bernard's ecstasy was curbed by Aquinas' more sober linking of caritas with ratio.

The cross-hatching of experience for Aquinas, Maimonides

and al-Ghazali is dense; it is equally so for Zhu Xi, Dogen and Nichiren. Chinese language, literature and culture in general were the basis of learning in Japan (as in Korea). Dogen and Nichiren were raised on the same classics as Zhu Xi. Soon after Zhu's campaign to strengthen Confucianism against Buddhism, Dogen was travelling in China (1223-27) to gain a more profound understanding of Chan Buddhism, so to consolidate its position in Japan [58]. Different as their particular religious, philosophical and political categories were, each of these men drew on a set of conceptual and imagistic resources familiar to the others.

For Aquinas and Zhu Xi there are no common categories or resources: they knew no shared body of texts, no shared language, no jointly accepted canon of rationality, no joint cultural traditions. Trade and diplomatic contacts between Europe and China date back to the Han dynasty, to the opening of the Silk Road. Trade links also continued throughout the medieval period, either by sea, with the entrepreneurial assistance of Middle Eastern and Indian merchants, or overland through the Mongol Empire under the aegis of the Pax Mongolica [59]. These contacts yielded images that made of Europe and China a place of mystery in each other's eyes; not until Marco Polo's Il Milione do we find a more extensive, though still fabulous, presentation of one civilisation to the other. Marco did not set off from Venice, however, until 1271, seventy years after the death of Zhu Xi and four years before that of Aquinas, and his work bears no direct significance for us here. There

was furthermore no serious or extensive exchange of ideas between Europe and China until Jesuit enterprises in the late sixteenth century [60]. For the period we are dealing with Europe and China represent discrete entities, each with its own specific complexities of historical development [61].

(ii) The Medieval Ecumene: Contextual and Structural Issues

Separateness of Chinese and European world and vision notwithstanding, certain links between medieval cultures nonetheless did provoke significant religious and intellectual exchange - not only within areas of common culture but also between different cultural configurations. Intense devotionalism within Hindu bhakti, for instance, likely left its mark on Islamic spirituality - on Sufi mysticism - in turn shaping troubadour perceptions of ecstatic love [62]. Abelard was famous for his secular love poetry. Bernard of Clairvaux was in his youth a troubadour; so also Aquinas' brother. Cistercian philosophy of love - and its all-male fraternity - was a transformation of a secular religion of love, a shift in its energies. That Bernard, and Aelred of Rievaulx, lived in a world shaped at some remove by Kalidasa is a fertile notion [63].

Equally so the thought that Zhu Xi was provoked by Nestorian Christian concepts. Small Nestorian communities flourished in Tang China [64]. In Zhu's writings - not as a central theme - the idea of a personal God recurs, of a

Lord who might with consciousness direct the course of the cosmos [65]. Such was never a dominant motif in Confucianism, though it is suggested in certain early texts - the Shijing and Shujing - which were part of the Confucian canon. Perhaps these texts were the source of Zhu's thinking. Or Nestorian or Muslim ideas. Or Buddhist. The force of the latter two suggestions is not that they are correct, but that they could prove so: Song China, through past and present contact, was part of a far wider intellectual ecumene than that determined by its geographical boundary [66].

Points of cultural contact thus urge questions reaching beyond the immediate contexts of Aquinas and Zhu Xi, and also broaden onto more general structural aspects of culture. I do not wish to suggest here any theory of archetypes, any universalism, but these are issues that lead us to a first question, a heuristic opening of issues. We can take two themes: love and knowledge (with accompanying networks: self-love and altruism; sexuality and asceticism; flesh and spirit; desire and communion - or: inspiration and labour; scholarship and intuition; books and cosmic order; solitude and disputation). In Hindu spirituality these are canonised as two ways: bhaktimarga and jnanamarga. These can be judged separate themes heuristically, with multifaceted links in a network of interactions.

Medieval European intellectual life was powerfully

shaped by scholasticism: in its dominant concern with logic and metaphysics, and its magisterially formalised ways of dealing with topics, it remains the most comprehensive and detailed style of philosophy in the Western tradition. In contrast with the earlier medieval organisation of learning in monasteries and cathedral schools, scholasticism at its height was closely associated with the university (or, in its medieval designation, the studium generale). Aquinas spent much of his life studying and teaching at the university of Paris, and for some his work bore too many echoes of secular intellectualism [67].

In contrast with scholasticism there existed the emphasis on mystical and religious desire already encountered with Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153). This shaped the lives of Francis of Assisi (1181/2-1226) and Bonaventure (1221-1274) and lay at the heart of the devotio moderna. But the projects of love envisaged here were not solely worked out within religious communities. Bernard preached crusades and linked spirituality with politics. Bonaventure, in the university forum, spelled out a mystical theology rivalling Aquinas' in vision and intentionality.

Similar points occur in the Islamic world, first with a series of seminal thinkers - Avicenna (ibn Sina, 980-1037), al-Ghazali (1059-1110) and Averroes (ibn Rushd, 1126-1198) - jointly forming the high tide of Islamic philosophy. It was the Aristotelianism of the Arabs that was a strong

stimulus to Aquinas' Christian Aristotelianism; if the Stagirite became known as 'the Philosopher', then Averroes' commentarial work on the Aristotelian corpus won for him the epithet 'Commentator'. The intellectual work of the philosophers has its counterpoint in the intense mysticism of al-Hallaj (857-922) and Rumi (1207-1273) and in the development of the Sufi brotherhoods, which in many cases counted philosophers amongst their associates and charged philosophy with a religious dimension [68].

The major Jewish philosophical work was that of ibn Gabirol (1021-85?) and Maimonides (1125-1204), who continued in their writings to use the categories of neo-Platonism. Intellectual life was also formed by strong traditions of scriptural exegesis and Talmudic interpretation. The counterpart concern with religious and mystical experience here lies in the increasing importance attached to the Kabbalah [69].

In India, in the early medieval period, Samkara (788-820) powerfully argued the intellectualist Advaita Vedanta philosophy, thus setting a stamp on later philosophical work. This was balanced by the devotional philosophies of Ramanuja (d.c.1137) and Madhva (1199-1276), with their stress on bhakti rather than jnana. The development of Tantric schools carried the stress on direct religious experience further, with important consequences for Naropa (1016-1100) and for the Tibetan Buddhists Marpa (Mar-pa,1012-1096) and Milarepa (Mi-la ras-pa,1040-1123)

who were influenced by him. Tantrism, whether Hindu or Buddhist, raised profound questions for any intellectual or devotional structuring of life.

The issues finally in Song China, where Zhu Xi was at the centre of a flourishing neo-Confucianism, parallel European scholasticism in many ways. Here certainly the formalisation of logic and a philosophy of language - so much the hallmark of the schools - was not a major concern. But learning and scholarship were, and the banner of Zhu Xi's movement carried the Daxue phrase zhizhi gewu ("extension of knowledge through the investigation of things"). Neo-Confucianism was as much a religious as a philosophical movement. For Zhu, religion lay particularly in this conception of learning, in a slowly-accumulative approach to knowledge which allowed the individual to acquire the mind of the sages [70].

For other neo-Confucians such as Zhu's philosophical opponent Lu Xiangshan (1139-1193) and also later Wang Yangming (1472-1529) enlightenment, sagehood, and a morally complete life were more directly intuitive affairs, not entailing a burden of learning, but susceptible of direct, uncultivated expression in daily life. In the contrast between learning and intuition, practice and spontaneity, an ancient separation of Chinese value systems and styles of ethic is made manifest: present in early Confucianism, it marked also a polar tension in the developed schools of Chinese Buddhism. In the Song, the intuitive side was

still present in Chan Buddhism, and found expression also in poetry and in certain traditions of painting [71].

Two contrasting and interlinked ways of structuring experience, then, are evident in a range of cultures and in the lives of various individuals. For some these ways existed in acute tension: Naropa and al-Ghazali perceived a radical divide between the concerns of philosophy and religion, in the end abandoning the former for a commitment to religious practices. With Aquinas and Zhu Xi, however, the issues was different; and while Zhu's early life was marked by a religious uncertainty and quest that is absent with Aquinas, their work in general expresses a deeply-achieved synthesis of philosophy and religion [72].

This achievement ties closely with the ways both men searched for excellence in their own lives, and with the ways they perceived excellence in human affairs. With Aquinas contemplative and meditative disciplines were central to his development, and provided a necessary and indispensable context for a correct understanding of philosophical issues [73]. Similarly, Zhu held the practice of jingzuo, a form of sitting meditation influenced by Buddhist discipline, central to his philosophical pursuits [74]. In this both men understood philosophy to be more than the exercise of rationality alone. They tied intellectual practice to programmes of moral and religious self-cultivation, and in this perceived philosophy to be ultimately wisdom and intuitive knowledge

[75]. While elevating the power of rational discussion and inquiry they took it nonetheless as preliminary to a more complete form of understanding.

4.CONCLUSION

If we have introduced here some preliminary structural categories, it is not, as we have acknowledged, in order to pre-empt any judgment on universalism, or to indicate any substantive conclusions towards which our inquiry might tend. The categories - too loosely defined anyway to constitute more than some preliminary markers or indicators - are simply heuristic devices that might serve to open an exploration of cultural diversity. What is of vital import, given the differences between Chinese and Western cultural traditions and philosophical systems, is the unfolding of a narrative within which those differences might be set against each other and be read both in their difference and in the moments of convergence. In this narrative we will be attempting to move beyond the style of parallel description which characterises a good deal of comparative work, using a guiding - and again, initially loosely defined - theme of excellence as a way of moving through a variety of philosophical positions.

CHAPTER 2

REN 仁 IN ITS PRE-CONFUCIAN CONTEXT

> Well into the nineteenth century it (Chinese culture) was still Neolithic, not rejuvenated, as elsewhere, but simply interminably complicated in on itself, not merely continuing on the same lines, but remaining on the same level, as though unable to lift itself above the soil where it was formed.
> P. Teilhard de Chardin, The Phenomenon of Man.

> As to the effects of an increased knowledge of Chinese thought upon the West, it is interesting to notice that a writer so unlikely to be thought either ignorant or careless as M. Etienne Gilson can yet, in the English Preface of his "The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas", speak of Thomistic Philosophy as 'accepting and gathering the whole human tradition'. This is how we all think, to us the Western world is still the World (or the part of the World that counts); but an impartial observer would perhaps say that such provincialism is dangerous. And we are not yet so happy in the West that we can be sure that we are not suffering from its effects.
> I.A. Richards, Mencius on the Mind.

1. INTRODUCTION

To read towards Zhu Xi and Aquinas from the beginnings of their respective traditions; to recapitulate a fraction of the forces operative in these time-spans; to grasp the sense of even a chapter of the Analects, and to deepen that by a reading of Confucius' world as a particularised play of repression and enhancement of desire; to detour in and around the standard readings so as to retrieve aspects of thought neglected or forgotten - to work in this way is to activate some of the problems in comparative philosophy I

spoke of in chapter one.

(i) Confucius and Confucianism

Our first opening will be in the memory of a stance prior to the Analects, in the world which these sayings attempt to comprehend, suppress, retain in an old-new saying, the world of the Shijing singers.

To speak of ren is almost to speak first of Confucius: the term occurs extensively in his discourse, but its prior use is so thinly attested we can effectively say that it was he who coined it as an item of language and a theme of discussion, or he who re-coined it, stamping his effigy on the reflux of its brief earlier energies. Ren bears the burden of Confucius' vision of life, but its force is various and its possible interpretations and conjunctions encourage those multiple readings which focus the differences in Confucian traditions [1].

Confucius inaugurated a style and an epoch in philosophy that in the eyes of some is now coming to a close [2]. In life and activity he was near contemporary with such others as the Buddha and Mahavira Jaina, the early Upanishadic seers, Jeremiah and deutero-Isaiah, Solon, Aeschylus and Socrates. The simultaneous play of these individuals on the stage of world history has led to the designation of the "period" in which they lived as the Axial Period or Axial Age. Jaspers takes it as the starting point for his philosophy of history and refers to it as

> (the) axis ... situated at the point in history which gave birth to everything which, since then, man has

> been able to be, the point most everwhelmingly fruitful in fashioning humanity ... It would seem that this axis of history is to be found in the period around 500 BC, in the spiritual process that occurred between 800 and 200 BC. It is there that we meet with the most deep cut dividing line in history. Jaspers,1953:1.

It is also a time that is important for our reading of eros since this term, as ren, was first used then in any extended way. But there are difficulties in the concept of a "period" as employed here, particularly given the low level of cultural interaction evident during the centuries concerned. Furthermore, the attempt to derive the structures for a single philosophy of world history from the varied philosophical and cultural developments which occurred then is, as we shall see later, quite mistaken, even thought it has been useful as an initial device for thinking about comparative philosophy [3]. Important recent treatments of Chinese intellectual history, Bauer,1976, and of early Chinese philosophy, Schwartz,1985, have employed the notion of the Axial Age in interpreting Confucius' work, and I will return to the issues involved here below [4].

2. CONFUCIUS' INHERITANCE: REN IN THE SHIJING.

The first recorded use of ren 仁, occurs in two Shijing odes, both dating to the latter part of the -8th century, nearly two hundred years before Confucius' birth [5]. No sign of the character exists on any oracle bone dating from the Shang dynasty (-1766 to -1122), or on any bronze vessels dating from the Shang or the Western Zhou (-1122 to

-771). It cannot be found in any parts of the written classics deriving from the Western Zhou (in any of the early odes, that is, or in any sections of the Shujing or Yijing that can be ascribed to that period). It has been suggested that one character on some older bronze vessels might be an early form for ren, but there is as yet no means of determining this with any confidence [6]. There may be certain bronze inscriptions belonging to the Spring and Autumn period (722-481) - thus prior to or contemporary with Confucius - on which the character does appear, but they will not be significant for our present discussion. The only relevant textual materials which can safely be said to be pre-Confucian are thus the two Shijing odes [7].

The odes in question are Shuyutian and Luling.

Shuyutian

Shu is away in the hunting field,
There is no-one living in our streets.
Of course, there are people living in our streets,
But no-one like Shu,
So handsome (mei), so ren.

Shu has gone after game,
No-one drinks wine in our streets.
Of course, people are drinking wine in our streets,
But no-one like Shu,
So handsome (mei), so good (hao).

Shu has gone to the wilds,
No-one drives horses in our streets.
Of course, people are driving horses in our streets,
But no-one like Shu,
So handsome (mei), so brave (wu).
Mao 77; Waley 1960:39.

Luling

Here come the hounds, ling ling
And their master so handsome (mei) and ren.
The hounds, with double ring,
Their master so handsome (mei) and brave (quan).
The hounds with, triple hoop,
Their master so handsome (mei) and strong (si).
Mao 103; Waley 1960:255

(i) The Context: Change and Transition in Zhou China [8]

Ren in the Analects is a term of central moral import; in the Odes it seems to carry no moral connotations at all. Instead it specifies one of a number of values constituting the code and ethos of Zhou aristocratic culture. This first use of ren exists within a transition from pre-moral to moral value systems, within a shift in the complexity of forms of symbolism and structures of social life, a shift thus in a network of repressions, exclusions and enhancements. In the Shijing ren lies on the fringes of a mythico-religious worldview, society set within a broad horizon of cosmological order, the chief social functions exercised by a hereditary scribal-priestly class. In the Analects it exists at the centre of ethical debate, the ends of the human community and of individuals within it a direct matter of concern through public discourse, the authority of ministerial function now increasingly granted to persons of proven competence rather than inherited status [9].

The world of the Shijing is cosmological in its basic structures, though the time-span covered by the odes makes of that world far more of a shifting and dynamic process

than the notion of cosmological order might suggest. Central theological features are tian (Heaven) as the provident source of cosmic vitality and foundation of all norms, together with the spirits of nature and the ancestral spirits as powers operative in the processes of the world:

> We bring our offerings
> Our bulls and sheep;
> May Heaven bless them
> Our ritual (li) is patterned
> On the rules of King Wen.
> Daily we bring peace to frontier lands.
> See, King Wen blesses us;
> He has approved and accepted.
> Now let us day and night
> Fear Heaven's wrath
> And thus be shielded.
> Mao 272;Waley,1960:229.
>
> Very hard have we striven
> That the rites (li) might be without mistake.
> The skilful recitant conveys the message,
> Goes and gives it to the pious (xiao) son:
> "Fragrant were your pious offerings,
> The Spirits enjoyed their drink and food.
> They assign to you a hundred blessings.
> According to their hopes, to their rules,
> All was orderly and swift,
> All was straight and sure.
> For ever they bestow upon you grand store
> Myriads and tens of myriads."
> Mao,209; Waley,1960:210

The structures of belief indicated here were inherited by the Shijing poets as part of a long-established pattern of religion in early China. The centrality of transcendent forces pervades the scheme of Shang religion, whose world was as much governed by a sense of the numinous, the "mysterium tremendum et fascinosum", as ancient Egypt or

Mesopotamia. Within this domain of the numen the extraordinarily frequent consultation of the ancestors by means of oracle-bone divination marks the steps the Shang took to render the transcendent rational and manageable [10].Ancestors were consulted in relation to matters of ill-health, appearances in dreams, the propitiousness of a hunt, a marriage-alliance, an act of war. Not reckoned wholly benevolent even to their own descendants, the anscestors were powerful capricious figures who could intervene to disrupt human affaris. relations with them could be rational, however, insofar as they were (had been) human: their emergence in Lungshanoid and Shang theology marks a different cosmological order from that governed by animal powers alone. Within this part-rationalised, part-humanised order appeasement - particularly through broadscale practice of human sacrifice - and control constituted the two hallmarks of Shang sacrificial relations with the power of the Other, organised by the king and the royal household in the interests of their own political authority.

In essence this sacrificial-ancestral cult was retained by the Zhou - the practice of human sacrifice continued late into Zhou times - but set within a framework of belief in tian as provident guardian who called the dynasty into existence and would preserve it insofar as it was faithful to the mandate with which it was charged:

The charge (ming) that Heaven gave

Was solemn, was for ever.
And ah, most glorious
King Wen in plenitude of power!
With blessings he has whelmed us;
High favours has King Wen vouchsafed to us
May his descendents hold them fast.
Mao,267; Waley,1960:227.

Zhou is an old people,
But its charge (ming) is new.
The land of Zhou became illustrious
Blessed by God's charge (ming).
Mao,235; Waley,1960:250 [11]

The precise force of the claims concerning the Mandate of Heaven, tianming, is difficult to determine. For some it represents the beginning - in the -11th century, in the speeches attributed to the Duke of Zhou - of a specifically moral tradition of rulership, emphasising the king's responsibility to Heaven for the well-being of the people [12]. For others it represents an example of realpolitik, the formulation of an ideology encouraging the Shang to accept their conquest by the Zhou,at the same time legitimating Zhou hegemony. Truth doubtless lies in both positions, though the particular force of the latter comes from Zhou attempts to erase the Shang's memory, in an act of forced amnesia designed to consolidate Zhou control [13]. For our purposes here it suffices to noe that tian was central to the Zhou cult, that it was in feudal relations administered through the cult that political order was invested, and that no specifically moral order - either conceptual or institutional - was developed separate from the order of the cult. Not that is until the politico-religious crises of the -8th century, which are diffracted through some of the odes [14].

A number of these odes indicate a deepening spiritual malaise and questioning, a failure of belief in tian: tian no longer cared for his people and did nothing to alleviate their suffering:

> I go out at the northern gate;
> Deep is my grief.
> I am utterly poverty-stricken and destitute;
> Yet no-one heeds my misfortunes.
> Well, all is over now.
> No doubt it was Heaven's doing,
> So what's the good of talking about it?
> Mao,40; Waley,1960:305.
>
> That blue one, Heaven,
> Takes all our good men.
> Mao,131; Waley,1960:311
>
> My father begot me,
> My mother fed me,
> Led me, bred me,
> Brought me up, reared me,
> Kept her eye on me, tended me,
> At every turn aided me.
> Their good deeds I would requite.
> It is Heaven, not I, that is bad.
> Mao,202; Waley,1960:317

The voices speaking in these odes are reminiscent of those expressions of suffering in Mesopatamian religion which culminate in the ethical lament of the Book of Job [15]. Here, in the Zhou context, we find an index to an equally profound structural change underway in a religiously founded universe, a change not issuing in a theology of suffering or in the elevation of suffering as a recurring central motif, but a change where religion, politics and ethics eventually came nonetheless - in the work of the first philosophers - to be more precisely separated as symbolic orders. Religion as ritualism was no longer adequate without some moral practice and intentionality.

The power of sacrifice, of transcendent agents and their intermediaries, was no longer sufficient, and perhaps not even necessay, as a source of social well-being. The energy of the human agent might itself alone be an effective force in preserving and vitalising the life of the community [16].

These condensed themes evoke the sorts of change at work in the mid-Zhou worldview, and evident also in other cultures at the time; they point to a widespread dynamic in the evolution of symbol-systems, though their "contemporaneity" in the Axial Age is from our point of view fortuitous.Bellah refers to the emergence at this time of a strategy of world-rejection that marked the growth of major religious traditions [17]. Voegelin, in more extensive elaboration, identifies, in Kirkegaardian manner, a leap in being that brings into play a radical new stance in the world, a shift from compact to differentiated symbolisations of experience, the opening of a world of "inner" human experience and the emergence of concepts of autonomy, a loosening of the powers of naturalistic enchantment, the differentiation of a sense of historical order from cosmological order [18].

For Israel Jeremiah focussed issues by specifying a disjunction between ritualism and ethics, stressing Yahweh's preference for moral integrity, and the same call echoes in the other Hebraic prophets: the moral individual is to be an image of the holiness of Yahweh, and the moral

stance taken is one which moves towards the formation of a universalist ethic. The Upanishads mark a break with Brahmanic ritualism, substituting the power of meditation and asceticism for that of the sacrifice, and claiming that the essential self, atman, of the individual is the locus of, identical with, transcendent power, Brahman. And Socrates marks a shift from the cosmological reflection of the Ionians, putting the ethical individual and his role in the state at the centre of philosophical debate. In all this comes a certain emancipation of the human from transcendent powers sacrificially appeased, together with an idealisation of a specific and presumed universally valid human ideal: the holy one, the philosopher, the sannyasin, the Buddha, the sage or noble one. We find such an ideal conceptualised in Confucius' discourse on ren, with its attendant reference to the ideal person, the junzi, noble man. The first use of ren in the Odes, however, indicates a "preliminary" celebration of human power and achievement, though not yet within an ethical context.

We will find also that discourse on ren in the Odes begins the process of an idealisation of maleness that became profoundly consolidated later, and that is also attested in other cultures at the time. It thus seems that, as part of the phenomenon of the emergence of philosophy, of world-rejecting religions, of the theorisation of transcendence and the quest for an inner

ideal self, and the organisation of that quest both in terms of the visionary rhetoric whereby it was articulated and the institutional forms whereby it was lived, the systematic exclusion and suppression of "the feminine", in theory and in practice, was set in motion. The delineating features for this, if not the foundational motives behind it, are precisely discernible.

In the Indian context women occupied an important position in the Vedic world, but came to receive an increasingly secondary status through the Upanishadic period. There is one famous woman philosopher,Gargi, in the early Upanishads but the rest of the leading figures are men [19]. Women figured amongst the early groups of sannyasin, but were excluded as these groups consolidated: the Buddha refused at first to countenance an order of women, yielding only under pressure from his aunt [20]. Both the Buddha and Mahavira Jaina perceived women as a hindrance to, and as ineligible candidates for, enlightenment and salvation [21].

In the Greek context an original stratum of, if not matriarchal religion, then of religious and social life where the nurturing powers of nature were represented as 'feminine', became progressively overlain with the more strongly patriarchal forces of Olympian belief. Women were central to Minoan cultic practices, and as religious functionaries were organised into their own schools; traces of these exist into the classical period on Lesbos but, as

the culture of Greek city-states became elaborated, the opportunities for women in education and in the public sphere were radically reduced [22]. Plato and Aristotle both regarded woman as a deformity, an aberration from the masculine ideal [23]. Aeschylus reads and re-reads the dispossed feminine powers of the cosmos first as the Erinues, Furies, and then - their energy finally domesticated in democracy - as the Eumenides, the Kindly Ones [24].

The power and force of the patriarchal order in Judaism is clear enough, figured foundationally in the contours of Yahweh as masculine lord and his people as marked by the 'feminine' attributes of submission (to use the categories thus is already to acknowledge the inherited distribution of gender attributes). But Yahwism was an overlay on an earlier style of religion where a mother-goddess, and feminine powers of nature, were more vitally central concerns [25]. Part of the force of prophecy as a movement in the Axial Age is the establishment, in the domain of men, of the sole authority to speak with the voice of God [26]. The representation of Yahweh as heavenly, celestial, powerful, and the people as of the earth, submissive, marks also a hierarchical polarisation of heaven and earth, a dispossession of the earth's energies, that occurs in other contexts: world-rejection, rejection of the feminine, rejection of the earth, form an interlinked complex at this time, varying in its details in different milieux.

It is difficult to establish the first religiously symbolised contours of "the feminine" in China. One claim is that a religious centrality for woman did exist early, figuring still in Shang belief [27], and it has also been argued that the structural principles of early Daoist practice preserve evidence of a priority given to women, and of some form of matriarchal cult [28]. Women were active as warriors and diplomats in Shang and early Zhou, but again we will see that with the rise of philosophy the scope of the feminine became profoundly curtailed and domesticated; certainly we meet with no women philosophers, and [the problematic status of feminine imagery in the Daodejing and Chuci (Songs of the South) apart] the imagery and style of philosophical disputation engaged by Confucians, Mohists and Legalists is profoundly subordinating of women. The beginnings of that process, as we suggested, can already be observed in the Odes.

(ii) A Definition of the Human: Aristocratic Value and the Hunt

In Shuyutian and Luling the power of human action is celebrated through the figure of the hunter. Traditionally in China the hunt was the noble or aristocratic pursuit par excellence. Far from being a pastime it was strongly hedged with religious overtones from Shang times at least. Questions on oracle bones indicate that the ancestors were consulted on the hunt and could approve, disapprove and generally determine its appropriateness. The spoils won served as a thanksgiving for the care of heavenly and

earthly spirits, and as food for the noble households.

The animal motifs on Shang bronzes further specify the religious ambience involved in the hunt, evoking the perceived fertile and daemonic powers of the natural world. The continuing presence of these motifs in Zhou decoration shows that a similar religious sense still marked the world of the early Zhou nobility. We know further that for the Zhou, as for the Shang, the hunt was significant in military as well as religious terms, providing occasion for practice in the tactics and skills of warfare [29]. This conjunction of religious and martial frames determines a complex identity for the hunter, and contrasts his domain with that of political and cultural values. He acts in a world of spiritual powers,and seeks the means by which these might be propitiated. He also develops those martial skills which help maintain and further the sway of a particular order. At the same time in possessing these he constitutes a potentially disruptive force against the stability of any form of order. He thus stands on the threshhold of nature and culture, serving as an ambivalent link between two worlds. His life risks physical and spiritual danger, and the possibility of cultural exclusion. In becoming the subject of praise he is marked at the same time as the bearer of an unpredictable physical and spiritual power.

(iii) Ren in a Martial-Heroic Context

This religious and military background belongs to the

hunter in the Odes, while the crisis in religion to which I have referred etches his outline more sharply: here he is both part of the traditional world, receiving his identity from the opposition of values implicit in it, and also a figure in a different world, where the individuality of his own presence and action are stressed. The Odes present a moment of low relief as the hunter steps from anonymity to humanity, becoming a part of culture while standing as a question mark against it. This form of identity is indicated more precisely by the ascription of qualities in the Odes, and by the location of ren within an economy of martial-heroic virtues. To see this, we can consider the relations between ren and other dispositions referred to in the odes we are considering (hao, good or accomplished, wu, brave, martial, courageous). In all of this, and for reasons that are specified further below, ren works to define "the human" in a particular way.

First, within each ode there is a contrast between mei and the other terms. The phrase mei qie - recurs and is also used elsewhere. It may have been a formula for describing the nobleman, and its repetition at least suggests that a certain physical grace or beauty was taken as a standard characteristic of nobility [29]. While mei indicates an aspect of appearance however, hao, wu, quan and si all appear to be dispositional terms. This is clear in Shuyutian where hao and wu indicate a talent for drinking and horsemanship respectively, and in Luling quan, bravery, and si, strength, mark two of the primary

dispositions required of the hunter (though since these characteristics are obviously visible signs a disjunction between appearance and disposition should not be over-stressed).

With a constellation of terms established thus, encouraging a reading of ren which makes it a sign of apparent grace or potent disposition, we have a sense of ren that is markedly different from the one it normally carries in the Analects, where it is generally translated "benevolence" or "humaneness." One reading takes its sense in the Odes to be simply "manliness", claiming that this first use of the word is directed toward securing a general definition or specification of what it is to be human [30]. This claim is supported by the points remarked above on the shift in the structures of the Zhou religious universe bringing a growing sense of the autonomy or uniqueness of the human world. And it is also supported by the structure of the charactwer ren 仁 which comprises the character for man, ren 人 , plus two horizontal lines. At the same time this interpretation entails that the human receives its first definition in terms of a set of martial-heroic qualities - a point that we need to follow further.

The reading of ren 仁 as manliness is not the traditional one. The Han dictionary Shuowen takes the structure of the character 仁 to be equivalent to 人人 (where the two horizontal lines indicate a reduplication of the character for man), suggesting that ren 仁 means "men together"

and hence community. This is in line with later Confucian interpretations of the term, but makes no sense when applied to the Odes. The suggestion that the two lines are reduplicative seems most apt, but that also allows the interpretation that ren is the quality belonging to men in the plural, man in general, everyman - hence that ren specifies "manliness" in its broadest sense. This is the interpretation that will hold here, to be modified later, and we might see what is at stake in it.

If we take ren as manliness some gloss is clearly necessary. Is manliness for instance a quality predicable only of men, but not of women, so that it thus means "maleness"? We have already indicated some of the issues here. And is ren predicable only of a certain class of men, so that the aristocrats can be said to be ren but not the artisans or slaves? Again, we have already raised this issue in chapter one in pointing out that some contemporary Chinese philosophers take ren to be predicable only of the aristocratic slave owners, holding that this was the case not only for the early Zhou period but also for that of the first philosophers [31] . Clearly at stake here also is the extension of the term ren 人 , for if ren 仁 is the generalised and distinctive virtue of the ren 人 it is important to know who were thought to be ren 人.

3.THE IDENTITY OF THE REN 人

(i) Structures of Shang Society

In the eyes of some commentators the ren originally formed a particular social class, and it is claimed that this is shown in the use of the character in oracle bone inscriptioins for the Shang period, and in other subsequent writings. Against this however Chao argues a quite different thesis:

> it is important for us to confirm the understanding that the term jen was a word meaning "person" or "man' in general without any social or political implication. The term was not concerned with whether such a person or such a man was a free man or a slave, an alien or a fellow countryman. Chao 1982:117

This reading makes of ren a term of general human extension, similar to homo or anthropos, and in one sense such would seem to be required, given that the pictograph from which ren developed is a representation of the human figure. Chao reckons to establish his argument on the basis of two kinds of inscriptional use of ren: the references to zhongren, or "the multitudes", and those to the Shang ruler's self-designation as yuyiren, "I the one man" or "I the first man". As we shall see however, neither of these instances definitively secures his point, and a final interpretation must remain open.

One set of occurrences shows that ren was used to refer to a number of non-Shang tribes. Prusek,1971 for instance, speaks of oracle bone inscriptions which identify as ren a tribe or series of tribes on the borders of the Shang domain who were the subject of various punitive expeditions by the Shang. Here it is not clear whether ren is a proper name for the tribes, or a general term

referring to "tribes" or "peoples". The second possibility is suggested by the fact that ren used of tribes is a loan character, and was substituted in later writings by other characters which served as proper names. This is further supported by a certain parallelism in use between ren and rong, the latter being a general term for "barbarians". Rong can be qualified in various ways: we find beirong, northern barbarians, shanrong, mountain barbarians, darong and xiaorong, "big" and "small" barbarians. In a similar manner we encounter Jingren, Changren,Xianren, Er-ren, Kuren, where the first character in each case is a place name, thus giving as a form of translation "the tribe/people of X". [32]

From this it is at least clear that ren refers both to peoples outside the Shang state, and to certain structural aspects of the Shang polity (yuyiren and zhongren). However, not all non-Shang peoples wer called ren: some were referred to as barbarians (rong, and also chiang) and there is a strong differednce at least between the ren and the chiang. Ren does not, then, refer to all human beings as such, and may perhaps be a normative term which specifies some as human, or as people, in contrast to the barbarians. Perhaps the non-Shang ren were those living on the borders of Shang cultural hegemony, who in some way acknowledged or participated in Shang suzerainty [33].

This normative function of the terms "man" or "people" is commonly attested elsewhere, and various tribes and

communities refer to themselves simply as "the people", "the men", "the humans" [34]. Such self-designation identifies the particular cultural practices of the tribe as the sum of what it is to be human. Those outside the tribe, with their different practices and forms of social life, are seen in various ways as less than human, non-human, "barbarians". Strategies of incorporation often also exist whereby "the others", "barbarians", can, through establishing appropriate relationships with "the humans", become (partly) human. (We will see something of this in the next chapter in relation to Confucius.)

As a hypothesis here, and in light of this other evidence, we can take it that the Shang saw themselves first as ren and extended this status also to those other tribes or groups with which they had alliances. (Marriage alliances were particularly important for the Shang. Wuding, Shang ruler from c. -1300 to -1242, had more than fifty wives and through these marriages is reckoned to have secured the support of various other groups,Chao,1982:1-2.) This hypothesis need not conflict with the fact that the Shang conducted campaigns against peoples known as ren, for there is no presumption here that alliances once made were permanent, or that different tribes at different times might not have wished to free themselves from commitments to the Shang. Indeed it was perhaps steps towards such independence which precipitated the Shang campaigns.

Whatever the status of the other tribes, it is the self-referential aspect of ren for the Shang that we can

take to be central, and the meaning of this can be further specified by a reading of the terms zhongren (multitudes) and yuyiren (I, the one or first man).

For some Marxist historians the zhongren, or zhong, represent a slave class. It is not possible for us here to enter into a close reading of early Chinese society; within any such discussion the question whether the Shang constituted a slave society remains an issue, and all we can do at this point is establish some parameters. One recent excursus in philosophical history claims "that there have been only five slave-based societies in human history, namely those of Greece, Rome, the ante-bellum South, Brazil and the West Indies" Hall,1986:31. Even if the Shang did not constitute a slave society, however, slave-ownership seems to have been a strong aspect of Shang life, and on this basis Chang Cheng-lang reads the zhongren thus:

> (zhongren) were farmers, and were the fighting men in wars. They ... usually occupied a very lowly position, opposite the ... nobility. They had no title to land ... and they were severely tied up with agricultural collectives, contolled by the ... rulers, were conscribed to become soldiers, paid tributes, and performed labor services. When they were soldiers they would become slaves when captured, and if they refused to become soldiers they and their families would instantly become slaves also. Their lives and their possessions were controlled by the king and nobles, being in essence their tools and possessions. [35]

Speaking against such a position, however, Chao 1982:117-21 argues that the zhongren, or zhong, did not constitute a slave group and that the Shang cannot be read as a slave society [36]. The zhongren do represent something like a

labour force, constituting the lowest position in a rigidly hierarchical Shang state; as such they could be sent to cultivate the fields or to establish a garrison, though amongst them there "might be a plain citizen or the head of a family, a royal official, or even a local lord" Chao ibid. p.120. From the term zhongren alone,then, we cannot conclude anything specific about the meanings of ren within the Shang polity; ren seems to cover all the people, and also to refer to women, since women were probably part of the labour force. One form of differentiation there might be in the term, however, is suggested in the contrast between the zhongren and the wang, king, as yiren.

The parameters at work in the king's reference to himself as yuyiren cannot easily be ascertained. If we read yiren as "the one man" there may be the notion that the king is the representative of the people, incorporating their well-being and destiny in his own life, a notion evident in Mesopotamian and Egyptian theories of kingship, as in Jewish and Christian theologies of representation: Adam, also "man", and Christ are taken in different ways as representatives of the whole of humanity. And in later Chinese political thought the emperor is seen as the representative of the whole people. In this style of thinking a particular individual, whether historical or fictional, becomes mythologically the cipher for an ideal humanity, incorporating either in whole, or in terms of some dominant aspect, the essence of human nature and its potential.

Certainly in practice the Shang king had a representative role. He was the central figure in the divinations whereby the favour of the ancestors and spirits was secured. He represented the needs of the people to them, received their messages, and thus served a mediating function. He was the one man insofar as communication between Heaven and Earth occurred primarily through him. In the same sense he was also the first man: first in the eyes of the ancestors, since they looked to him to provide for them, first in the eyes of the people, since they also looked to him for the provision of order and well-being [37].

The contrast between zhongren and yuyiren does not establish any high degree of differentiation in the meaning of the term ren. What it does establish perhaps is a reinforcement of the normative reading of ren as "the humans" that we suggested above. Here it is the king who is paradigmatically human, and the rest of the polity participates in humanity insofar as it enjoys well-ordered relations with him, sharing in the ritual feasts, honouring the duties of marriage alliances, and fulfilling allotted functions in the state. We cannot agree with Chao that ren refers indiscriminately to all persons; it refers rather to the Shang, and then to their allies; and it refers first to the Shang king, and then to those bound to him in the practice of ritual.

(ii) Structures of Zhou Society

The discussion at this point is at some historical distance from the first use of the term ren in the Odes, but it is important in helping to establish the scope of that term. We shall next, in a reading bearing more directly on ren, briefly consider the meaning of ren after of the demise of the Shang. The issue here will be that in Zhou society we find a greater degree of stratification than we do with the Shang, and that this altered the scope of ren. The term became more differentiated, and came implicitly to exclude, and also to mask the marginalisation of, certain groups of people. Some writers argue that, at the time of Confucius, ren refers only to a social elite, and min refers to the mass of the people: the argument then follows that ren refers only to a style of virtue appropriate to this elite. One problem with this approach is that it does not admit of resolution on the basis of linguistic usage alone. Here, in trying to delineate ren for the early and mid-Zhou period, we will situate the linguistic issue in a larger social framework.

(a) Tian, Ren 人 and Min

A first glance at the characters for tian and ren shows a similarity of form that also covers a partial similarity of meaning. Early examples of tian appear as the representation of a man with a large head, and the character has been taken as a general specification of the power of the great ancestral kings. Thus Creel:

> "T'ien came to mean the group of ancestral Kings. They controlled the destinies of men on earth, and thus T'ien came to have the sense of providence or

> fate. Since Chinese does not distinguish singular and plural, T'ien as the group of ancestral Kings came gradually to be the single powerful deity, T'ien, "Heaven." T'ien was also used as the name of the place where the ancestral Kings lived, in the heavens. And T'ien was also used to mean the literal, visible sky." Creel 1970:502.

Tian was a deity of the Zhou in particular, in contrast with the Shang high-god Shang Di. We have already seen how the specific doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven, tianming, was used by the Duke of Zhou to articulate the moral authority of tian but, this doctrine apart, it can perhaps be doubted whether there was any great formal distinction between Shang Di and tian (and we have also remarked further how arguments about moral authority might have been incipiently present in shang conceptions of royal authority). Shang Di and tian both represent ancestral power, and represent the continuing interlinked dependency of the human world and that of the ancestors.

Man issues from the ancestors: the point is graphically put in the Zhou reference to the king, wang, as tianzi, son of heaven [38]. Tian and wang jointly represent the might of ancestral power, and this is shown in the upright form structuring the character for each; ren, by contrast, as a designation for man in general (if that is what it is) shows a figure stooped and bent, as if either tilling the land or bowing before authority [39] (we will consider later how ren , ren , and a series of characers with initial "r" might be read as marking qualities of yieldingness, humility and deference which were taken to be primary qualities of the (ideal) ren人.)

The ren lived in a moral universe founded by tian and maintained by the wang; we have seen, though, how that universe could accommodate human sacrifice, and how the providence of tian had become a questionable notion by the middle of the 8th century [40]. The crisis of suffering in Mesopotamia led to a deeper theorisation of the mysterious power of Yahweh, and in Job this entailed both a retention of anthropomorphic imagery, an intensified sense of Yahweh as the creative other, and an acceptance of human incomprehension before divine mystery. The relation of man to god as a relation between two persons was affirmed. For the Zhou, however, from the late odes through to the philosophers, the sense of tian as personal was gradually eliminated, in favour of an idea of tian as impersonal principle of moral and cosmic order. In spite of that move, though, traces of a sense of personal dependence on tian did remain later, and to grasp the force of that we might note how tian and ren 人 were interlinked in the Odes.

Perhaps a chief point to note is that, even at its most strongly anthropomorphic, tian lacks that overwhelming specification via personal characteristics which marks the identity of God in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Tian is not a creator in the sense of making the world from nothing. Tian and the world seemingly co-exist as parts of a permanent and continuous universe. Tian is not a transcendent fashioner of the world (the Hebrew scriptures specify God's creative power as of a potter, or as of

speech producing something out of nothing). Tian does nothing to bring the material world into being, nor to govern its course. Tian does not organise the stars in the firmament, nor interfere in the course of nature, though the ancestral and cosmic powers do have sway within the world [41]. Tian's relation is to the (Zhou) people as a whole: specifically tian gives birth to the people, sheng min; Waley, 1960:147; the ruler, junzi, then assumes tian's function in relation to the people, being specified as "father and mother of his people", minzhi fumu, p.179. (A variant on the birth-theme has a primal mother-figure Jiang Yuan giving birth to the people, min, in giving birth to the first ancestor of the Zhou, Hou Ji.)

Tian gives blessings and rewards, is called on as a witness to human life and suffering, is wrathful and destroys those (the Shang/Yin) who do not follow his precepts; yet tian is also capricious, drawing the Shang to their downfall, and then granting the Zhou possession of a mandate that is never certain. [The caprice of Shang Di for the Shang is marked by the repetition-compulsion of the oracle-bone consultations; for the Zhou the same issue is evident in the increasing importance given to correct performance of the rituals, li.] The ancestors reside with tian. Tian's action is "without sound, without smell" Waley p.251. At places tian and Shang Di are assimilated to each other:

> God (Di) shifted his bright power,
> To fixed customs and rules he gave a path.

> Heaven (Tian) set up for itself a counterpart on earth
> His charge was firmly awarded. Waley p. 256.

Tian is progenitor of the Shang as of the Zhou:

> Heaven bade the dark bird
> To come down and bear the Shang. Waley p.257

To establish the relations between tian and ren we must first see how ren and min are linked, if for no other reason than that the Odes do not speak of tian's relations with ren directly, whereas tian is said to give birth to min; min here is usually taken to refer to the Zhou tribe or people as a whole, and we need to consider whether ren and min are contrasting, overlapping, or interchangeable terms. A contrast between the terms is the usual assumption, and one standard reading, as we have remarked, is that min represents the peasantry and ren the elite. Hall and Ames, however, writing on the significance of the terms in the Analects, propose a different reading, and we can consider whether in principle we are also able to extend this back to cover Shijing usage. They write:

> The distinction between "the masses" (min) and "persons" (jen) that we find in the Analects and other classical text has been a focus of some debate...The question as framed is whether or not this distinction entails a conscious class distinction between the masses (min) who have no right to office, and the upper classes who do have political status and privilege...we believe that a credible case can be made for a perhaps blurred yet significant contrast between the amorphous, indeterminate mass of peasants (min), in themselves having little by way of distinguishing character or structure, and particular persons (jen). The distinction, however, as we understand it, is fundamentally cultural rather than political. That is, political privilege and responsibility are simply conditions which attend higher enculturation. Although economic and social status would certainly affect one's opportunities for

> edification, birth in itself is not a warrant for the distinction. A person is not entitled to political participation because he is born into an exclusive jen class. Rather, he becomes jen as a consequence of that personal cultivation and socialization that renders him particular. Hall and Ames, 1987: 138-39.

I think the focus here on enculturation as the key distinction is right, but what Hall and Ames play down is the relative inseparability of that notion from questions of class and social position. The two issues are indeed partially distinguished by the time of the Analects, where an increasing degree of social mobility allowed some of lowly social origins to achieve the privileges of culture, though the interpretation here is complex, as we shall see in the next chapter; for the Shijing period, however, where social mobility was not high, the issues of inherited social status and enculturation are hardly separable at all.

In one ode, part drinking song, part celebration of the joys of human company and conviviality, ren and min appear at first as terms of equal extension - the ren seeks out his friends and kinfolk, the min should drink if they would preserve their vitality (de): ren and min are seen to have similar governing functions for different stanzas (Waley, pp.204-5). Yet the world translated "kin" is sheng, with its connotations of rawness, birth, origins - we have seen it associated with min, and it is so again in another ode where the people min are brought into being (sheng) as naturally as young gourds spreading (Waley,pp.247-8). The min are thus to do with origins, birth, the starting point

of culture - yet culture itself, designated a system of kinship, is here also part of origins, part of nature, not separate from it. The ren who seeks out his friends and kin (sheng) - and the kin are enumerated as paternal uncles, zhufu, maternal uncles, elder brothers and younger brothers (xiongdi), -is the one who thus seeks out the min as his total natural kinship order; here, in calling the clan together the ren has more the status of clan leader who is set over the min as a whole, whilst also being a part of them. Yet if min refers in this way to the total kinship group - and then by extension to the whole of the Zhou as descended from the one common ancestor - the question arises whether any part of the social order was thought to exist outside clan affiliation. One way of distinguishing ren and min in the Analects is to suggest that ren designates those who were members of "the hundred (named) clans", baixing, in contrast with the min who were the nameless mass of persons existing outside clan order. Yet, if min in the Odes designates the whole clan as a "natural" kinship group are there any members of the polity thought to exist beyond the clans, and what designation do they receive?[42]

Many odes indicate that the min are a group in a subordinate position. One instance, in an allegory that is not clear, speaks of the people down below, xiamin, (Waley p. 235); another speaks of a junzi, nobleman - referred to also in the same ode as ren - who ensures that the min do not waver (p. 192); King Wen is ruler of the people below,

xiaminzhi wang (p. 259); Hou Ji sets the people to work (p 269); the people come in homage (p. 273); the people below are in awe of the ancestors, xiamin you yan (p. 279); the min are helped by the warlike kings of Shang (p. 276); the junzi is the father and mother of the people, minzhi fumu, support and refuge of the people, minzhi you guei, minzhi you xi, Waley (p.182); the wise ruler is a pattern to his people, wei minzhi zhang, (p.300).

Subordinate though they are, the min are nonetheless a sign of ancient order and virtue. They are born direct from tian or the first ancestor, and are therefore a link with primordial value - from the beginning the min have distinctions and rules, you wu, you ze p. 141; a dance-celebration, whose origins lie in the mists of time, was begun by the min, p.225.

In some cases there is a conjunction of the terms ren and min, but the force of the conjunction is not clear. The wise ruler should listen to the opinions of ren and min, be gracious equally to friends, companions and min p.301. The junzi should benefit the min and the ren p.181. At one point a contrast of innate vitality or "virtue" between ren and min is perhaps indicated:

> There is a saying among ren人 :
> "Inward power (de) is light as a feather
> Yet too heavy for common people (min) to raise"
> Waley, p.142.

In these instances, while the conjunctions of ren and min might be of similar, overlapping or contrasting terms, the

issue surrounding de is clearly one of contrast: the ren understand de and can possess it, but it is beyond the capacities of min. What I take to be indicated here is the belief that, while the principles of innate order and value are given with the min, the protection and developing of that order, the full flowering of what is given as raw innate principle, is possible only with the ren (we will see this contrast transposed in Mencius into a theory which contrasts the seeds of virtue with their final flourishing). To follow this idea further we might note the semantics of ren in the Odes.

The chief aspect to ren in contrast with min is the differentiation of qualities and characteristics it commands. Ren identifies specific persons, usually male but also female - guren is for Waley an "old love" in a poem sung by a male lover (p.58); meiren is a "beautiful woman", where the same ode (p. 221) has shouren as a "big man". Ren is often compounded with another term to specify a particular kind of person, or grouping of persons. Jiaren designates a household (p.106, "the people of her house"); daren are strangers or others (p.99), specifically contrasted here with kinfolk; guoren are people of one's own land (p.174); countrymen are bangren p. 313. Ren can function simply as a suffix or qualifier, in ways comparable to the "-er" suffix in words like "worker", or the "-man" in tradesman" : xingren is an escort (p.67); muren is herdsman (p.167-8); nongren is an (agricultural) labourer (farmer, husbandman) (p.169-70).

Many odes focus on the ren as bearers of civic, moral or exemplary qualities, or else criticise them for their lack of these. Ode 270 (Waley) condemns a ren for his lack of dignity, poise and "manners" (ritual fluency or etiquette) (ren er wuyi, ren er wuzheng, ren er wuli]. A lover complains of a ren "Of whom no good word is said,/ How can he be true?" (p.63); another girl laments the wickedness of ren (renzhi bushu) p.59. A recurring epithet is that of the "good ren", liangren (p 112, pp 311-2). Some are wise men, some are foolish (zheren, yuren p. 118). When King Wu rules, "grown men could use their inward power" (zhengren you de, p.261). Those whom Waley refers to as "the Mighty Ones" (p.132) are men possessed of culture and refinement (wenren).

Finally we might note that,together with a differentiation of attributes, there is also a certain hierarchy implicit within the uses of ren. The king is still referred to as yiren. More interestingly, a distinction is drawn at one point between junzi, nobleman, and xiaoren (small or lesser ren: "the ways of Zhou (zhoudao)...are for gentlemen (junzi) to walk/And for commoners (xiaoren) to behold": Waley p. 318; the junzi rides in a chariot, the xiaoren form his protective escort, p. 123. While xiaoren becomes a term of moral disapproval with Confucius, in the Shijing it is simply an indicator of lesser social status.

The contrast between min and ren can thus be very precisely put in terms of differences in enculturation: the min constitute the undifferentiated mass of society (or clan membership) as a whole, whilst the ren form that elite group that actively participates in the li (rituals) that govern social order, and thus enjoys the privileges of culture (wen). A formal parallel seems to exist between the mass of the ancestors and the min, on the one hand, and those particular ancestors who are known and named (including tian) and the ren, as particular persons, on the other. While the min are born from tian, theirs is purely a passive function in society, and it is the ren who are actively engaged in that maintenance of social order, and of culture, that is tian's active concern.

4.A CHINESE HEROIC TRADITION

Earlier we established a background against which ren in the Odes might refer to (male) aristocratic excellence in its most general sense. This is partly affirmed by the way in which ren 人 as a designator for "man" is itself already a profoundly value-laden term. We might now note how our reading of ren 仁 is reinforced by the structure of each ode, insofar as we find a representation there of an hierarchical ordering of values and dispositions.

The way in which ren is repeated in the Odes suggests that it was perceived as a standard attribute of the nobleman, and the conjunction mei qie ren, twice used, may itself have been a conventional descriptive formula. (The

conjunction of mei and ren also occurs once in the Analects. The formula is similar to the classical Greek epithet kalos k'agathos, and this conjunction of beauty or grace with general virtue and excellence is as central to early Chinese as to early Greek perceptions - even though in the case of each culture there were significant alternative traditions which ascribed value to what was, in the dominant tradition, reckoned ugly or deformed.)

Ren appears in the first stanza in each ode. In Shuyutian hao and wu refer, as we have seen, to quite precise qualities, whereas ren is more general in reference, specifying a charismatic quality in lifestyle as a whole. Shu is presented as the spirit and vitalising principle of the community. While he is away it appears that there is no-one present. The people are reckoned to find life and energy in the charisma of this hunter-warrior. In describing him as ren this most general enlivening aspect of his virtue is indicated.

In Luling the sense is also well held if ren is taken to be more comprehensive in reference than quan and si, specifying manliness as a whole rather than any more precise disposition. In each ode the placing of ren in the first stanza, and the wide range of reference suggested by the structure of the character, can thus be taken to grant it a priority over any more circumscribed dispositions, so that hao and so on are best seen as representing particular aspects of ren. The man who is ren is thus by definition

equally hao and wu, quan and si.

On the basis of this reading two further questions arise concerning the semantics of ren. They concern the general status of martial-heroic virtue in early Chinese culture, together with its choice here as the hallmark of the nobility (as opposed for instance, to wen: refinement, culture, paideia); and the reference to Shu as in come sense an exemplary individual.

Whether and in what respect China has a tradition of heroic culture has long been at issue. Part of the discussion concerns the absence of the epic from the major forms in the Chinese literary canon [43]. In the West, whether with Achilles, Agamemnon, Odysseus and Herakles, or with Beowulf, or Cuchullain, the martial hero has been a paradigmatic figure, and has given substance to the epic. Indeed, here the epic form is created precisely for the heroic warrior, for the one who asserts his own individuality, who glories in his own action, challenging the gods and the perceived limits of his own destiny. It is Virgil's song armorum virumque. In Greece this glorification of youth, war and valour, even though circumscribed with warnings on hubris, provided both for the emergence of tragedy and the structuring of philosophy. At the same time it meant that the lyric aspect to poetry was there held secondary, a significant difference from the concerns of Chinese literature, where the lyric has been central from the Shijing on.

It would of course be wrong to equate epic traditions and heroic traditions without remainder: any culture probably has accounts of heroic individuals and events that constitute its own origins and an essential aspect of its identity, without fixing these in an epic form. And in early China there are strong traditions concerning such culture heroes as Yu, who quelled the floodwaters and facilitated agriculture, or Shun, who provided an ancient model of good government [44] . Furthermore, recent study has shown that martial-heroic virtues are accorded a place within Chinese tradition, within lyric poetry, although they never came to occupy a central position [45]. In interpreting ren in the Odes, then, we need to know why a Chinese martial-heroic ethos has not been more fully elaborated, in an epic form, and why it has remained marginal to the dominant literary-cultural tradition.

The tension between military and cultural values is symbolised in the contrast between the two founding heroes of the Zhou dynasty, Wu the martial king and Wen the cultured king: the exploits of both are celebrated in a number of odes. In this celebration, however, we do not find the symbolisation of two equally significant modes of life: Wu remains secondary, he prepares by conquest for the Zhou succession to the Shang, he initiates the possibility of a stable culture. But it is the values of this culture, of refinement, music, dance, love and the rhythm of the seasons and seasonal activities that are dominant,

and most sharply and variously expressed. There is no glorying in the details of battle and bloodshed such as we find in Homer. (Indeed it is difficult, given the traditional Chinese stress on the sanctity of the body, on the duty to return the body intact at death to the ancestors, to see how any celebration of war in this sense could have arisen [46].) If martial virtues are important, they are so instrumentally, and only in the service of culture. As such, they are hidden rather than expressed, and the memory of the violence they entail is erased [47].

(If the question could be pursued at all adequately in terms of social structures, it would also doubtless emerge that the power of a priestly and scribal class to determine values and normative forms of culture was such that no warrior class could formalise its own ethos. Nonetheless, steps were later taken in this direction, as we find with Mozi. And I take it that the definitions of ren in the Odes is also a move of this sort, though still sufficiently tentative to be acceptable to the scribes.)

We have it then that martial-heroic virtue is in China secondary to the virtues of cultural order; that it does not receive any major expression (although it does receive some expression); and that the form of epic literature, together with its particular structuring of the world, is not significant for the Zhou. How does this bear on the meaning of ren, and the expression of martial-heroic

values, in the two odes we are considering?

My suggestion is that the odes Shuyutian and Luling express the subordinate martial-heroic virtues at a time of relative cultural disorder, when heroic qualities were able to assert themselves. They do so at the beginning of a long period of conflict that only finally ceased with the demise of the Zhou dynasty. They give a definition to human nature at a time when one was first sought, as the human order became to a certain extent specific, and separate from the order of tian, the transcendent spirits, and the legacy of culture. They celebrate the power of action in an ambivalent figure - the hunter-warrior - and in an ambivalent person - the noble Shu. They define ren as male aristocratic heroic excellence, but it is a definition that holds only for a time, until a new definition of ren is established within the horizon of wen rather than wu.

That definition I will consider in the next chapter. Here we can note finally how the person of Shu fixes the reading I have suggested. From what we know of Shu through other sources, he would not merit a title to Confucian ren as benevolence or humaneness Shu was a warrior, a fighter, a conspirator, a regent who unsuccessfully schemed the overthrow of hos brother. He would have been at home with Aiax and Odysseus; there his ren would perhaps have been arete, an aggressively heroic energy on the threshold of civic and cultural order [48].

CHAPTER 3

REN IN THE ANALECTS

> History opposes its grief to our buoyant song,
> To our hope its warning. One star has warmed to birth
> One puzzled species that has yet to prove its worth:
>
> The quick new West is false, and prodigious but wrong
> The flower-like Hundred families who for so long
> In the Eighteen Provinces have modified the earth.
> W.H. Auden, Sonnets from China IX

1.TIME AND ORDER, CULTURE AND BARBARISM

> The Master wanted to settle amongst the Nine Barbarian Tribes of the east. Someone said,"But could you put up with their uncouth ways?" The Master said, "Once a gentleman settles amongst them, what uncouthness will there be?" An.9.14

On this showing, Confucius might be taken as a crypto-Daoist. What investment is there here in "the barbarians" as a locus of original innocence, a tabula rasa prior to culture, where lack of virtue is not positive evil but merely an emptiness, a void, perhaps even an inclination towards culture once the appropriate stimulus is provided, the pattern and scheme of virtue made available? Certainly this would not be the positive and paradoxical celebration of non-virtue that we shall see with Laozi, but it problematises Confucius' relationship with his own Zhou heritage as the privileged gathering and enclosing of virtue. For what is to be made of those within the Zhou who stray from virtue, who abandon the closure, who neglect the

heavenly way once known? Criticism of these is an integral part of Confucius' discourse, highlighting in particular the dangers attendant on the corruption of the superior man (junzi), since in the hierarchical order and dispensation of the state it is his failure in virtue that is judged the cause of escalating disorder for the people as a whole. But is this disorder a better or worse state, one less or more susceptible of remedy, than the non-order of the barbarians?

There are no grounds elsewhere in the Analects for presuming that Confucius abandoned faith in the ideal order of the Zhou; furthermore, he did not talk about escaping from the Zhou to the simplicity of the barbarians, but rather of converting them to Zhou ways. Even in its disorder and possible decline Zhou culture is judged superior to anything else:

> The Master said, "Barbarian tribes with their rulers are inferior to Chinese states without them." An.3.5. [1]

For all his criticism of its people, Socrates did not go beyond the walls of Athens, finding the balance of law and freedom more fully achieved there than elsewhere; Confucius likewise did not choose to leave the Zhou domain, reckoning Zhou order to be the fulfilment of previous cultural styles:

> The Master said, "The Zhou is resplendant in culture, having before it the example of the two previous dynasties. I am for the Zhou. An.3.14 [2].

But where do familiarity with one's own and the fear of exile mesh here with ignorance of others, with exclusionary

strategies developed in the formation of cultural identity, of the home, the proper, the heartland, the familiar and familial gods, order and destiny itself? And is there a context where faith in one's own might no longer prevail? There is little of despair in the Analects, but at points Confucius implies that the Zhou might finally abandon the path of culture, at which point he would abandon the Zhou:

> The Master said, "If the correct teaching (dao) should no longer prevail and I were to put to sea on a raft, the one who would follow me would no doubt be Yu." An.5.7 [3]

[Though note also how, in pursuing the dao of the Zhou, Confucius is further spoken of as one "who keeps working towards a goal whose realisation he knows to be hopeless." An.14.38.]

The barbarians and theZhou respond to the call of virtue within different temporal frameworks: the conversion of the barbarians is judged almost instantaneous, "once a gentleman settles amongst them"; the re-establishment of the Zhou state in the way of heavenly virtue is a task for generations [4]. Certainly Confucius would have been sufficiently aware of historical conflicts with "the barbarians" to know that they were not willing subscribers to Zhou hegemony, but perhaps he dismissed difficulties thus raised by assuming that so far they had seen only the martial (wu) not the cultured (wen) face of the Zhou, that the force of virtue once evident would be so attractive as to win them over of its own accord. This certainly meshes with a faith in the authoritative and effective power of

culture which is evident within the Analects, with a philosophical style that ascribes priority to ritual (li) and the power (de) inherent in ritual, a style as much to do with gesture as with word, pointing to the figure of the shaman at work within the text of the Analects, to a residuum of archaic religiosity that the manifest discourse of Confucius does not overtly invoke or endorse but draws on and is drawn into as a particular stance in the world [5]. This authority, this call from the order of tradition and from the gods, can in turn hold sway as much over the Zhou as over the barbarians:

> "The virtue (de) of the junzi is like the wind; that of the small man (xiaoren) is like the grass. Let the wind blow over the grass and it is sure to bend." An.12.19

Elsehwere, speaking of ren, Confucius says "Is ren really remote? No sooner do I desire it than it is here." An.7.30. This power of summons is the power of the shaman, a power central to Chinese thinking from some of the earliest evident moments of religion through to the present. Within and through ritual the shaman is able to woo, invoke, command the powers of the universe, and within ritual also the passage of time is broken and entry into a non-temporal realm achieved. Here is the moment of the instantaneous, the 'now' that ruptures the flow of temporality, the seam through which another world makes its entry, the ladder where the gods pass to and from the world of men [6] . Here we can see how the rational-bureaucratic style that is part of the Analects, its Apollonian moment, is an overlay on -

certainly in tension with - a Dionysiac element that substitutes energy and power for rationality; it is this element, the return of a certain repressed within the text of Confucius, that evokes a contrast in the rhetoric of temporality between the instantaneous and the gradually transformative. Speaking of virtue as other than the instantaneous acquisition of ren, Confucius for instance acknowledges a slow, transformative passage throughout the life of the individual as the only means of acquiring virtue. It is of interest here to know whether,in our interpretation these two motifs, we can incorporate a Pauline-Kierkegaardian contrast between a moment of faith, and a life of works under the law [7].

Where does this leave questions of the barbarians and of time in our reading of the Analects? Three areas seem to lie outside time: the gods and ancestors, the barbarians, and the individual soul [8]. On most approaches to the Analects the question of a soul is excluded from consideration, and Fingarette indicates the kind of issue at stake here:

> my point ... is not that Confucius's words are intended to exclude reference to the inner psyche. He could have done this if he had had such a basic metaphor in mind, had seen its plausibility, but on reflection had decided to reject it. But that is not what I am arguing here. My thesis is that the entire notion never entered his head. The mataphor of an inner psychic life, in all its ramifications so familiar to us, simply isn't present in the Analects, not even as a rejected possibility. Fingarette,1972:45.

We will refer later and in more detail to the question of psychology, of the status of concepts of mind or soul in

Chinese philosophy more generally, though certainly at the most manifest level of Confucius' discourse the point Fingarette makes is secure. But in the Zhou period there was popular belief, not just in one soul but in two or a number, and this belief was as central to the cult of the ancestors as it was to the possibility of ecstatic transport on the part of the shaman. The soul - in life and after life - is, with the transcendent powers and the barbarians, assimilated to those larger cycles of change and transformation that are manifest in nature and that, in their regularity, appear timeless. And it is clear, in various ways, that Confucius presupposes some timeless moment as part of the structure of the person. Speaking, for instance, of the magico-ritual properties of the person - apparently in reference to the ruler, though the virtue of rulership is generalised - he remarks:

> The work of virtue (de) can be compared to the Pole star which commands the homage of the multitude of stars without leaving its place. An.2.1 [9]

This power of the fixed moment, this symbolic rooting of the person in the foundational order and source of virtue, this belief that the person can through culture become assimilated to what is already given as the order of nature - and we saw how culture came from nature in the birth-imagery of the Shijing - leaves the barbarian in an ambivalent position insofar as he already represents nature in a raw state. Here the barbarian, like the min, seems to be already close to the order of tian; does his untutored innocence mark a perfection that Confucius, in the passage

through culture, would wish finally to achieve, or is there, as we suggested for the Shijing world, a contrast at work between raw nature and worked culture, between the seeds of innate disposition and their full flowering in achieved virtue? On concepts of nature we will say more later.

2.THE FREQUENCY OF REN IN THE ANALECTS

These reflections open some themes that bear on our understanding of ren; they will be amplified and reworked as we proceed. We saw in the last chapter a first quasi-definitional use of ren. The minor significance the term has for the Shijing world contrasts radically with the discussions of Confucius: ren occurs some 105 times in the Analects, and 58 chapters deal specifically with it. This strongly suggests that ren may be Confucius' single thread, though the claim needs certain qualifications[10]. Firstly, if there is a single thread to the Analects it need not be manifest there; it may instead be implicit, the various overt terms of discourse might point to it in different ways without naming it. Secondly, it may not be ren that functions as the unifying principle; an equally strong claim could be made for li (ritual), or for a conjunction of ren and li as mutually implicating and reinforcing terms.[11] Thirdly, there may not be a single thread to the Analects: the text may be a compilation of sayings representing two divergent Confucian schools, one giving a priority to ren, the other to li. In this case the text could be read as governed by two organizational principles which might at

times be complementary but more often competing [12]. Fourthly, we might wish anyway to discard the assumption of a single unifying principle, as distracting from consideration of the diverse intentionalites which are located in the text, and which it is more our interest here to bring to light.

Since it is standard to assume a certain unity to the text, and to assume a mutually reinforcing role for ren and li, I shall at first follow those assumptions, introducing qualifications as the argument proceeds. Ren expresses Confucius' concept of an ideal way for humanity, a standard of perfect virtue (problematic as these terms are: the problems will be considered below. In particular, it can perhaps be doubted whether the concept of perfection is at all present in the Analects.) Discussions involving ren indicate that "being fully human" is conceived very differently in the Analects from the way indicated by ren in the Shijing. My assumption is that it was important for Confucius to divest ren of any of its previous martial-heroic associations, and to transform it instead into a fully civic and co-operative virtue [13].

While ren has an apparent centrality, and at least a frequency, within the Analects, one saying which has been strongly resistant to interpretation suggests otherwise:

> The occasions on which the Master talked about profit (li) destiny (ming) and benevolence (ren) were rare. An.9.1. (Zi han yan li yu ming yu ren.) [14]

The character yu has various meanings - as the conjunction

"and", the preposition "compared with, than", the verb "give forth, share with" referring to either speech or action - and the text can be variously translated depending on the meaning ascribed to yu and the punctuation chosen. Two different solutions to the problem have been proposed, both of which recognize the frequency of ren elsewhere in the Analects. Bodde re-punctuates the text, reads yu as a verb in each case, and translates:

> The Master rarely spoke of profit. (But) he gave forth (his ideas concerning) the appointments (of Heaven) (and also) gave forth (his ideas concerning) perfect virtue. Bodde,1981:385 [15].

This at least is an improvement, though it leaves us with a problematic linking of ren and ming. Ming is not a frequent term with Confucius, it cannot be read as fulfilling a central function in the Analects, and it is better recognised, like li (profit), as something on which the Master had little to say.

A better solution is proposed by Malmqvist, who notes from other sources that yu can have two different meanings in the same sentence. He therefore takes the first yu as "and", the second as "compared with", and translates:

> The Master spoke more rarely of profit and human destiny than of humanity. Malmqvist,1978:1549n.7.

Another possible translation, taking the first yu as "and" and the second as "discourse" would be:

> The Master spoke rarely of profit and human destiny.He discoursed on humanity.

These two final translations are consistent both with Confucius' frequent reference to ren, and his more

occasional reference to ming and li. The disjunction established here between ren on the one hand, and ming and li on the other, is crucial also for the general semantics of Confucius' discourse [16].

[A different procedure could also be followed, which would leave the first reading intact and would therefore have it that Confucius did indeed speak rarely about ren. This procedure would take seriously the notion that the Analects expresses two antithetical schools of thought, and would see the passage in question as a piece of polemic on the part of the li (ritual) school, questioning the credentials of the ren school by saying that the real Confucius had very little to say on ren.][17]

3. THE PROBLEM OF VIRTUE

With one exception, where ren is predicated of a community as a whole, ren in the Analects is an attribute of individual persons. It is standardly taken to specify, in a carefully circumscribed way, both a particular quality which is variously rendered as benevolence, humaneness, altruism, or concern for the well-being of others, and also the more general quality of human excellence or fulfilment in its broadest terms. (It also admits of various other interpretations, however, and these will be considered as occasion arises.[18]) It is strongly relational in connotation, insofar as it defines individual excellence in terms of the successful and harmonious functioning of the community, and of the individual's contribution to it.

> The Master said, "It is ren which constitutes the excellence of a neighbourhood. If in selecting a residence a man does not go where ren prevails, how can he be considered wise? An.4.1.
>
> The man of ren, wishing to be established himself, seeks also to establish others; wishing to be enlarged himself, he seeks also to enlarge others. An.6.30.

To this extent, and independent of any obvious theorised associations between ren and li (ritual), ren is in fact closely linked with the idea of li insofar as this indicates the rules of decorum, propriety, ritual and ceremony which shaped (aristocratic) life in Zhou China, which established the networks of co-operative value and thus constituted the normative principles of social order. It does also seem for Confucius that it is in becoming fluent, and ultimately spontaneous, in the practice of li that an individual becomes ren; though what this could mean more precisely we shall consider below. At the same time the stress on ren as a social virtue is balanced by statements which identify it as a quality of individual life which is of intrinsic value, irrespective of the ways in which it is socially cohesive. As an ideal human quality ren in the Analects is not attributed to the natural world, to the ancestors, or to Heaven.

(i) Aspects of the Paideia of Ren

We have already considered the aristocratic background to the pre-Confucian use of ren. A central feature of Confucius' work is his attempted transformation of the aristocratic code of conduct into a more widely disseminated set of social mores. One element in this is his reference

to the junzi (gentleman, noble person, superior man) as an ethical ideal. Originally the junzi was simply a nobleman, an hereditary member of the Zhou aristocracy, whose life style was ideally governed by li, and who had access to the institutionalised forms of learning where li could be known and practised, and where a sense of the cultural traditions from which li derived could be conveyed. We will consider li further, though we might note here certain indicators:

> The Master said,"Be stimulated by the Odes, take your stand on the rites (li) and be perfected by music." An. 8.8

> When the Master went inside the Grand Temple, he asked questions about everything. Someone remarked,"Who said that the son of the man from Tsou understood the rites? When he went inside the Grand Temple, he asked questions about everything."
> The Master, on hearing of this, said, "The asking of questions is in itself the correct rite (li)." An.3.15.

Archery was one of the privileged activities governed by li, and Confucius' comment on the decorum appropriate to it is a good qualifier for li as a whole:

> The Master said, " There is no contention between gentlemen (junzi). The nearest to is, perhaps, archery. In archery they bow and make way for one another as they go up and on coming down they drink together. Even the way they contend is gentlemanly. An.3.7.

For Confucius, in a move that at once reinforces and undermines the privileged status of the aristocracy, the junzi came to refer not to a specific social class, but to an ethical and cultural type transcending particular social roles (though perhaps never freed from them)[19]. Education of some sort was an important feature for the sons of the Zhou nobility, and the school, together with the family,

provided an initial context for training in li, and so for the development of ren. Insofar as ren is thus linked with a process of paideia - spoken of specifically as xue (study, learning) in Confucius' teaching - the question of the social distribution of ren - the question that is of which groups in society might realistically aspire to be ren - needs to be addressed in relation to the possible rise of a school system in the mid-Zhou period.

Other reform movements of the age in other cultures tackled this problem: the Academy and the Lyceum in Greece, and the educational role of the Buddhist sangha, are important examples of institutions given over to the cultivation of learning and virtue. Mencius refers later to a series of village schools, which perhaps indicates that by his time the option for learning had become available to more than simply a scribal elite [20]. To get a full reading of Confucius on this point (something impossible at this stage of scholarship) we would need to know whether his role as educator extended to founding places of learning, and whether, in this way, he really strove to make the junzi exemplary for all through some provision of education for all, or whether he thought of education as at most an opportunity availible to townspeople, to the nobility and to the rising merchant class. This identification of the groups that might realistically aspire to education would be a crucial component in any adequate interpretation of ren in the Analects [21]. My first assumption here will be that,

for the vast mass of the people, tied to labour on the land and to military service, the possibility of schooling was non-existent, so that in practice, though with certain exceptions, the range of reference for ren covers scribes, merchants and nobles.Other arguments supporting this view will be presented later.

In expressing a social code for a strictly hierarchical society li provided detailed specification of both authoritarian and deferential forms of behaviour, and being ren included the capacity to assume the dispositions of superior or subordinate as occasion required. While some translations of ren suggest that it includes a non-discriminatory attitude of concern for humanity as a whole, my claim is that any such reading of the Analects is forcedly non-contextual. Even in references to relations between friends, where we might expect attitudes to be spontaneously non-hierarchical on both or all sides, it still seems necessary to see ren as respectful and preservative of social order. That this is so is established in particular by the absence from the Analects of any symbolic or institutional resources which specify or nurture relations between persons as such, in virtue of something like a common humanity which in an absolute and irreducible sense renders them equal as human beings. Persons in the Analects exist entirely in terms of their formation within social hierarchies, and any concept of friendship has to be viewed in this light. [This is important given the contrasting situation in Greece, where

philosophical reflection on the nature of friendship was an important move for Plato (in the Lysis in particular) and Aristotle (in the Nichomachean Ethics and elsewhere) - though we shall see that the problem of hierarchy remained also an issue for the Greeks. [22]]

It is on these grounds, and particularly as regards the semantic relations between ren and li, that I speak of ren as a specification of what it is to be human in an aristocratic way. A text post-dating Confucius has it that punishments, fa, do not reach up to the nobles, and rituals, li, do not reach down to the common people, min. Confucius himself also remarked

> The common people (min) can be made to follow a path but not to understand it. An.8.9.

This suggests that, not admitted to the practice of li, the common people could not hope to become ren in any full and final sense [23]. In a move at once liberating and binding, the Analects presents an aspect of the life of the nobility as the completeness of human virtue, whilst allowing that in principle such virtue was not available to all, and probably not even to most, within Zhou society. And here the question of the scope of virtue has not to do with the intrinsic difficulty of its attainment - a point addressed and answered by Confucius - but with the social contextualisation of its practice.

(ii) Ren as Virtue in General: Being Human in an Aristocratic Way

One way to consider the frequency of ren in the Analects

is to view its use as a search for a definition of an essential and perfected form of humanity. Its reference to some general concept of virtue or perfection would thus parallel the referential function of terms such as arete and virtus. [I have already expressed caution on the idea of perfection. We will see that ren is the virtue of the junzi, but not of the sage, sheng; in this respect it perhaps indicates an appropriate perfection which Confucius reckoned to be manageable in his own time, in contrast with the ideal but impossible perfection associated with the sage.[24]] As well as referring to virtue in general, ren is also taken to refer to the specific virtue translated as "benevolence" or "humaneness". That much said, distinction tbetween these two usages is not clearly made, and there is no concern in the Analects with a formalised definition of ren; attention is given instead to a rhetorical and pragmatic articulation of its modes of manifestation, and of the dispositional qualities necessary for its attainment.

One saying linkes ren to accomplishment in li and in music, yue:

> The Master said,"What can a man do with li who is not ren? What can a man do with yue who is not ren?" An.3.3.

Here we would need to see li and yue from two viewpoints. As part of the process of paideia they would jointly constitute an induction to ren, elements in a rite of passage whereby an individual might progress to ethical and cultural maturity - in this sense, they assist a process.

At the same time they also constitute terms of a process: their perfect expression, their proper articulation in the life of the community, lies in the disposition of one who has been perfected in their practice, who is at ease with the conventions governing performance. To be perfected in this way is to be ren [25].

As a perfection, ren implies a quality of self-possession, composure, an ability to remain balanced and unswayed in extreme circumstances (we will remark later how this compares with the self-sufficiency of the Aristotelian agathos); in terms of adherence to li, it means following the normative ethical and cultural practices even when external circumstances do not favour this:

> The Master said, "The man without ren cannot live long in conditions of hardship, nor can he live long in comfort. The man of ren is at home with ren (renche an ren), the wise man profits (li) from ren. An.4.2.
>
> Yen Yuan asked about ren. The Master said, "To return to li through overcoming self constitutes ren. If for a single day a man could return to li through overcoming himself, then the whole world (tianxia) would consider ren to be his. However, the practice of ren depends on oneself alone and not on others.
> Yen Yuan said, "I should like you to list the items." The Master said,"Do not look unless it is in accordance with li; do not listen unless it is in accordance with li; do not speak unless it is in accordance with li; do not move unless it is accordance with li. An. 12.1.

The ideal of responsibility for self here - and the man of ren is finally able to use himself as a standard by which to judge others, An.6.30 -, mediated as it is through the practice of li, raises a number of tensions within any reading of ren. First, there is a tension between the ideas of ren as perfection and ren as benevolence. Even though we

are at this stage considering ren as perfection or general virtue, we would nonetheless expect some indicator which suggests a link between general virtue and the specific virtue "benevolence". [When Aquinas speaks of caritas he identifies it as the form and efficient cause of all virtues, as well as a specific virtue itself, but its former qualities are expressly linked to its specific function as "love" characterised as openness and orientation to God.] There is nothing that we have seen so far, however, that would encourage us to make any link between ren and benevolence. Ren implies balance, self-control, and fluency in li - and while certain li cover areas of interpersonal behaviour (as for instance the li governing behaviour towards a guest), so that it might be possible there to read ren as the spirit of benevolence at work in the practice of li, the network of li as a whole extends into areas of practice for which "benevolence" would have no bearing (as for instance wearing the correct kind of cap for a particular function An.9.3, or archery, which we have alrteady noted as a primary li-bound activity for the junzi.) And even in the context of li governing interpersonal relations, we would need to consider whether ren is a disposition of benevolence, or simply the general aptitude to perform the correct behaviour. (We will see later with Aristotle how even a discussion of friendship, philia, can focus on behaviour and intentions geared to self-enhancement, and show a minimal concern with affective disposition towards others.)

A second tension linked to the notion of responsibility for self - and a fruitful tension for Confucius - is that concerning relations between individual and community. "Self" and "community" are both normative notions in the Analects; as such they are approached in their ideal connotations as given through li. Here the perfection of self is mediated through one's role in the community (it is not the reclusive self-perfection favoured by hermits and others who withdraw from society), and as such it represents an enhancement of community life. To perfect self is, in part, to perfect the forms of one's relations with others.

A third tension would be that between deliberation and spontaneity in the practice of li, and thus in the expression of ren. Confucius favours a cultivated spontaneity, as that achieved by a musician who hits the right note at the right moment in any performance. The extension of the musical analogy to society as a whole opens a vision of society as fundamentally harmonious in its various functions, so that once all li have been mastered the notion of deliberation would have minimal place. The problem of choice is markedly absent from the Analects: one chooses to follow the dao expressed in li or one does not, but the notion that there might be a conflict between different li, and thus a choice to be made over which to be honoured at any particular time, is excluded [26]. The Analects systematically represses conflict and deliberation in favour of harmony, conformity to the specified details

of life, and spontaneous fulfilment of duties and role-requirements. At the same time - and insofar as Confucius himself acknowledges li not to be a static corpus of behaviour fixed beyond change, but rather a flexible and open-ended network capable of transformation - then space for deliberation (as, for instance, over which li, for whatever reasons, have grown obsolete) is acknowledged. Here I take it that the junzi, the one proficient in li and ren, is the one with authority to modify the practice of li - though there is a hidden conflict in the Analects regarding the appropriate locus of authority in society [27].

We have seen how Confucius can reckon ren to be something close at hand, but he also suggests the opposite, that ren marks a perfection which eludes him:

> The Master said, "How dare I claim to be a sage (sheng) or a man of ren (renche)? Perhaps it might be said of me that I learn without flagging and teach without growing weary." An.7.34.

He also suggests that ren is rarely manifest in others:

> The Master said,"I have never met a man who finds ren attractive, or who hates the absence of ren." An.4.6;

but he then immediately proceeds to remark that it is not through lack of ability and strength that individuals fail to be ren but (presumably) only through lack of inclination. At one level this might seem to raise a question concerning the degree of Confucius' own motivation in pursuit of ren, but I think it rather opens for us the problem of how to read the different sayings in the Analects. Two points are worth remarking. First, what Confucius says on any topic is

strategic rather than theoretic - it represents a particular response to a particular inquiry or situation and, as became much more the case with the Chan masters in the Tang and Song dynasties, it constitutes an attempt to waken insight and transformation in a particular individual, with his specific strengths and weaknesses, rather than to provide further amplification of a general theory. And second, Confucius' various sayings come from different stages of a long life given over to teaching, and any full hermeneutic would require a reconstruction of the developmental stages in his approach to any topic. Confucius himself reviewed his life in old age, describing it as a journey through a series of particular phases, each with its own accomplishment, and this in turn provokes two further observations. First, the young teacher might consider ren elusive, since he remains aware of a body of accomplishment lying beyond him, whilst the old teacher might well feel ren to be close at hand, so conformed has he become to the byways and intentionalities of li. And second, the notion ren might itself become differentiated so as to mark not some final single perfection, but the particular perfections available within particular stages of life. [Hindu philosophy, for instance, has four different stages of life with different perfections in dharma appropriate to each.] I leave these options on ren open here, since that is how they are left in the Analects.

In a curious series of sayings Confucius claims, in relation to some his own closest followers, not to know

whether they are ren. Given that he says so much about ren, and that ren is linked through li to the sphere of publicly observable performance, rather than that of inner disposition and intention, then the profession of ignorance here is difficult to assess. Elsewhere Confucius acknowledges that one individual in particular taught him to judge a man's virtue not by his words but by his actions (An.5.10), and we would expect him to be particularly able to apply such a judgment to the practice of his immediate followers; indeed, on one occasion he does not hesitate to assess the virtue of someone close to him:

> The Master said,"In his heart (xin) for three months at a time Hui does not lapse from ren. The others attain ren merely by fits and starts. An.6.7.

Various comments are appropriate here. First, Hui seems to have the status of favourite disciple for Confucius, much as John does for Jesus - Confucius would thus likely know his disposition and practice better than he would that of others, and so might feel able to comment on his ren. Second, we do not know the degree of contact Confucius had with his followers in general - he did not gather a comunity around him, as the Buddha did with the sangha, and thus there exists the possibility that he did not know the lives of many of his followers in close detail, so judging it wise to refrain from comment on their ren.[23] And third, the precise reference to xin here opens for us that area in the Analects - not extensive, but present - where Confucius is concerned with disposition and intention, as well as with performance. On this we can say that Hui's perfection of

ren lets us extend the analogy of acquired spontaneity in musical performance, by opening the area of personal commitment, and concern with perfection in performance, as necessary factors in any acquired spontaneity: only the sustained desire for perfect fulfilment of li, to match the spirit as well as the letter, draws out the fully moral aspect of performance, and it is in identifying this constancy of commitment and disposition that Confucius refers to xin.

(iii) Ren as Specific Virtue: Benevolence, Humaneness, or Some Other Quality?

It has been assumed for so long that ren might be translated as benevolence, or altruism, or humaneness, and thus be taken as a marker of other-directed concern and affection, that the notion that these qualities might be very far from anything indicated by ren is scarcely entertained. Yet a close reading of the Analects reveals very little that is of a markedly affective nature - so that the notion of interpersonal warmth does not emerge as a major theme - and the tenor of ren might much more be considered a formalised courtesy expressed through li, than warmth towards another known and loved; and in many cases it seems to have nothing to do even with courtesy.

This is not to deny that some structures of affection are presupposed by Confucius: respect and devotion towards parents is a central theme, with strong emphasis placed on

the expression of grief for three years at their death. Reciprocity (shu) is an occasionally praised quality, though this can be read as do ut des, expressive of a contractual basis for social order. Friendship is valued: the Analects begins with its recommendation:

> The Master said, "Is it not a pleasure, have learned something, to try it out at due intervals? Is it not a joy to have friends come from afar?" An.1.1;

and the affection Confucius had for Hui is marked by his manifest, almost excessive, grief at Hui's death. Yet the linking of affectivity with ren is problematic. The usually-quoted indicator is the following saying:

> Fan Ch'ih asked about ren. The Master said, "Love your fellow men (airen)." An.12.22.

We have seen already the distinction existing between ren and min (which I take to be continued, though in somewhat modified form, into the Analects), and our first observation here must be that, whatever is meant by "love", its expression exists from one ren 人 to another, not from ren to min nor between min [29]. "Love" here is thus mediated through li as the common bonds of practice and way of life within which the existence of ren is situated. Ren as airen is not a "direct" affective response of the heart (is not the simple expression of love found in many Shijing love lyrics), but is the mediated concern for others within a common culture group. Airen can perhaps be taken here as expressive of a range of possibilities, from a formalised reciprocity which keeps the social contract alive, through to that affective bonding with others whose lives mesh with

one's own. With these qualifications it can in part be read as warmth and benevolence.[30]

Another saying makes generosity towards others a component of ren:

> Tzu-chang asked Confucius about ren. Confucius said, "There are five things and whoever is capable of putting them into practice in the empire is certainly ren." "May I ask what the are?"
> "They are respectfulness, tolerance, trustworthiness in word, quickness and generosity. If a man is respectful he will not be treated with insolence. If he is tolerant he will win the multitude. If he is trustworthy in word his fellow men (ren) will entrust him with responsibility. If he is quick he will achieve results. If he is generous he will be good enough to be put over his fellow men (ren)." An.17.6.

Here generosity (which we could also call benevolence) constitutes but one part of the virtue ren, and the other named elements bear no necessary or intrinsic relation to it. (On the other hand, it is of interest to note that generosity to other ren is specifically identified as the quality of leadership.)

A further saying suggests that ren constitutes a generalised courtesy to others, linked with personal integrity:

> Zhonggong asked about ren. The Master said, "When abroad, behave as though you were receiving an important guest. When employing the services of the common people (min) behave as though you were officiating at an important sacrifice. Do not impose on others (ren) what you yourself do not desire. In this way you will be free from ill whether in a state or a noble family." An.12.2.

Here ren can be read as the expression of that achieved conformity to ritual that allows one to know and demonstrate the required courtesies in any context; from what we have

already remarked, it can be read as conformity to the spirit and not just the letter of li; it can be read as concern for the order manifest in li; but it does not need to be read at any level as a strongly affective concern for persons (which is not to say that Confucius lacked or disregarded such concern, only that it is not a theme of his discourse).

Ren is on a number of occasions linked with trustworthiness (xin) or correct and truthful speech [An.1.3,5.5]. It is spoken of as a capacity for concentration and application to work in hand [An.6.22]. It marks a prudence that does not act hastily [An.6.26]. It constitutes a basis in the self for achieving judgment about (the moral capacities and attainments of) others [An.6.30] .

It is a quality of the min when they are stirred by the good example of the junzi [An.8.3]. Ren marks an absence of anxiety (An.9.29), and a capacity to absorb without wavering the dislike of others (An.8.10). In all of this, I would suggest, it is best read - rather than as benevolence or humaneness - as courtesy to others and concern for one's own integrity, insofar as these notions are organised in letter and spirit by li [31].

4. REN AND LI

We have indicated that one reading of the relations between ren and li, ritual, might be as follows. Li, as a network of principles governing behaviour in a diverse range of social contexts, constitutes jointly a pedagogy and a

kind of score, guiding and orchestrating action so that society functions as a harmonious whole, with ren in consequence being the sort of social fluency arising from a full understanding of one's place in a hierarchically ordered whole where each individual "spontaneously" meets the details of his or her part. To be ren in this context, to have undergone the paideia of li, is to be as fluent as an archer or a musician (to follow Confucius' favoured instances) in using an acquired skill, when the skill in question is simply "being fully human" according to the definitions of humanness coded in li.

To those familiar with a metaphysical tradition, where customs and received practices (nomoi) are downgraded in favour of laws of nature and the perceived structure of the soul, the priority granted to li in articulating and founding ren might seem questionable and relativistic. In Greece the Sophists favoured the relativism of laws and values as these found different expression in different societies, but Plato perceived things oppositely: his attempt to establish virtue, arete, on a foundation of immutable moral principles - on knowledge of the good and of the soul's capacitites for goodness - was the first of a series of Western attempts to undercut relativism and to secure transcendental principles that are universally binding, thus tying moral and political order to them. This conjunction of metaphysical knowledge and self-knowledge marks a significant difference from the orientation of the Analects.

The comparison of Confucius with Plato should not be pressed too far: the latter was after all writing with some centuries of philosophical debate behind him, where the issues had already become diversified, while the inaugural function of the Analects is such that even claims to view it as a philosophical text are rendered suspect [32]. Nonetheless it did open a space for Confucian philosophy, and that space was one where, until the end of the Tang dynasty, metaphysical, psychological and,to an extent, epistemological issues were not a major concern, with the result that Confucian handling of ethical and political themes proceeded from different foundational and structural principles from those established early in the West. Even so the question still arises - it is a question in fact present in the Analects - whether some form of relativism is implicit in Confucius' li and how this might be understood. If it is, we have the further question whether this affects the interpretation of ren. Far from seeing ren as the single thread, as a unifying vision of human excellence, should we think of different forms of ren practised, for instance, in the different states of the Zhou domain; or of different forms apropriate to different social stations within a single state such as Lu; or even of different forms of ren appropriate to different stages of an individual life? Can these differences be united, and does their unity or lack of it constitute a problem? Two issues will help focus the inquiry.

Firstly the question of cultural diversity, a matter to the fore in classical Greece in a way in which it was not in China. Plato studied in Egypt perhaps, and knew of Persia - recognised, thus, two imperial civilizational traditions older than the Greeks. The movement of his thought in philosophy was of a piece both with that of earlier Greek speculation, and with that of Egyptian and Mesopotamian imperial ideologies, in its concern to find a single principle of order and single source of authority. While for imperial theology this led to an organisation of the gods under a high god, and a dispensation of divine justice through the mediation of the king, for Plato it led to an ordering of the functions of the soul and a structuring of the movement of desire, eros, so that the free man might achieve knowledge of the good. The opening of the soul as a locus of order was Plato's move to avoid relativism and the conflict it implied; its consequences will detain us for some time later.

For Confucius the issue of relativism in this sense did not arise. There were no other royal or imperial systems, no forms of culture that existed beyond the Zhou and that might put the divinely founded hegemony of the Zhou in question, nor was there need to speculate on the origins of the gods and establish a theogony, since the overthrow of the Shang and the assimilation of Shang Di to tian had sufficiently described the force and outlines of transcendent authority and power. The Zhou king had received the mandate, the

mandate was manifest in observance of the li, and in this sense we can take it that Confucius saw a single, fundamental set of li uniting the different local practices of the Zhou domain: differences there were, but these were of such a secondary order as to be compatible with cultural unity. And while with Plato the Forms are the objectives and motivation of moral striving, supreme exemplars of value, for Confucius the culture heroes Yao, Shun and the Duke of Zhou fulfil a comparable exemplary function. (Though this unified vison does need to be read in relation to one strong possibility of relativism opened in the Analects.)

The second point concerns those precise li to which the Analects might be taken to refer. While later Confucianism produced compendia of li (the Zhouli, Yili and Liji) there is no evidence that any such compendium existed at the time of Confucius [33]. Certainly particular li can be taken to be exemplified in older texts (in the principles of political action in the Shujing, or in the moral exhortations of the Shijing) but - especially as regards the latter text - we would need, for any adequate comment on the issue here, to know how Confucius intended it to be read: one surviving reading in the Analects, for instance, raises important questions as to how the poems of the Shijing were put to educational use [34].

We can direct inquiry by asking whether, for Confucius, all social practices are examples of li, and then whether

proficiency in all practices is required to achieve ren.

In one sense the organised practices of any society can be seen as rituals. When Fingarette speaks of handshaking as a recognizable instance of li, and its spontaneous expression between two people as an example of acquired social ease, he suggests one way of seeing li in the Analects [35]. But while li might exist for the smooth functioning of the whole, it does not follow that all li are directly interpersonal: we have seen that ren can be a quality, disposition or achievement of individuals on their own, and it seems similarly likely that li might specify the conditions for the fulfilment of a role (that of impersonator at the ancestral feast, for instance) without that role entailing, or entailing any high degree of, interpersonal involvement [36]. But then, are all roles governed by li, or only a select number? Zhuangzi's delight in presenting Cook Ding as a paradigm of Daoist excellence later brings home the point that menials and outcasts in society have their own perfection which is not covered by the li of the Confucian junzi, and the notion that the li do not reach down to the common people suggests that there is no early Confucian perspective for viewing non-elite skills as determined by li (li governing archery and charioteering, yes, li governing bronze-working, jade-carving or farming, no). To what extent might this position be true for Confucius himself?

The last point, whether there might be a li of farming,

directs us back to the Shijing, and the uses of li found there. Several odes tell of the regularity of the agricultural year, the existence of times and seasons for all things under heaven, and insofar as the first use of li derives from a sacrifical religious context it seems at least that the order of agricultural life is governed by li. It seems also, however, that the activity of ordering, and the group responsible for it, is what is of real significance here; and this draws us back to the priestly and scribal functions tied to ancestral and nature cults. If we take it that - ideally at least - the organisation of cultic practice moved from the centre to the periphery of the Zhou world through the enfeoffment of local rulers as civic and religious authorities, and that the practice of li was first centred in courtly circles, then while we may see the agricultural year as ordered by li, we have no reason to suppose that the mass of the people tied to the land were thought to practise li, or thought themselves to do so, as part of that maintenance of order.

Certain odes, however, suggest that things might be otherwise:

> In the seventh month the Fire ebbs;
> In the ninth month I hand out the coats.
> In the days of the First, sharp frosts;
> In the days of the second, keen winds.
> Without coats, without serge,
> How should they finish the year?
> In the days of the third they plough;
> In the days of the Fourth out I step
> With my wife and children.
> Bringing hampers to the southern acre
> Where the field-hands come to take good cheer.

In the seventh month the fire ebbs;
In the eighth month they pluck the rushes,
In the silk-worm month they gather the mulberry-leaves,
Take that chopper and bill
To lop the far boughs and high,
Pull towards them the tender leaves.
In the seventh month the shrike cries;
In the eighth month they twist thread,
The black thread and the yellow:
'With my red dys so bright
I make a robe for my lord.'
Mao 171;Waley 1960:164-5.

If we take the sentiments expressed here to be those of the people - and we have already suggested the folk origins of the Odes, however much they were later worked by court singers - then it would seem that the people could see themselves as active participants in a world governed by li, even if the roles they fulfilled were ascribed to them by an elite group as part of a specific order.

The difficulty in focussing a conclusion here relates to our manner of reading the compact symbolisation of experience prior to the differentiations of philosophical inquiry, and prior to the emergence of diverse marginal and critical genres [37]. Compact symbolisation and the tightness of social control at this point go hand inhand. We rely on the writings of an elite group as a filter for the perceived order of Shijing society. The Odes present a world neither riven with dissension, nor even marked by any significant disturbance. It has been claimed that the early centuries of the Zhou were in fact a time of great peace, but whether this is true or not we have no way of establishing whether the people acquiesced in the picture of them presented in the Odes, or resisted it.

That much said, we have only noted one reference in the Analects to the ren of the common people, and its acknowledged derivation from the exemplary behaviour of the junzi. We can also accept for the time of Confucius a degree of social conflict which made a single li-bound society of min and ren - if it ever existed at all - a thing of the past. With li not reaching down to the min it would seem wrong to hold that they might be considered ren in any significant sense. And with an acknowledged development of different li in different states, we have the implicit possibility in Confucius' own teaching that different forms of ren might represent appropriate perfections in different states [38].

5. REN AND MODEL EMULATION

One feature in becoming ren is the practice of li; equally important is the emulation of models, and these two features are closely related. Once more the analogy of a game or performance: proficiency does not lie in learning the rules adequately as theory, or even in playing - a lifetime can be spent playing badly; grasp of theory may never actually shape a worthwhile practice. Becoming good musically involves practice, but also listening to the masters, observing their technique, their finesse at translating marks into living sound. Acquaintance with variety is of the essence here, if the concept of mastering

an art is to become fully rounded. For Confucius it is the culture-heroes of the past who function in particular as exemplary models; in the present it is the king and the junzi who should do so, and whose demonstration of virtue should bring order to the state.

The idea of emulation involved is - with certain modifications - consistently hierarchical: it is always the masters one learns from, whether they be the ancient sages, the king and the junzi, or one' parents and elders. These are the keys to the dao, the traditional teaching, that Confucius aims to transmit and re-establish. More, however, than just a hierarchy of patterning is involved: the perceived ideal flow of virtue comes in a movement of descent from tian through the king to the various levels of the polity. [One aspect of Confucius' apparently contradictory position on the junzi as a ritual vessel is significant here [39]. The affirmative position that the junzi is such a vessel is a confirmation that virtue does not simply rest and gather with him. As is the case with offerings in the vessel, he is a moment of exchange in an economy where the flow and circulation, rather than the accumulation and hoarding, of virtue is at stake. The question whether the junzi should in all cases assist such circulation, or whether he should not also at times withdraw from the movement of exchange and gather his own virtue as capital, is one which we shall consider in the next chapter.] This descent of virtue explains why Confucius urges the junzi to aspire to public office: from a status

where self-effacement and receipt of the veneration of others sit in precarious balance, the junzi should with maximum effect propagate heavenly virtue; and since it is precisely Heaven that is author of the virtue which is in him, the balance of positions at stake should always incline fully to the side of self-effacement. Model emulation here is not overtly geared to the shaping of an independent self, but to the dissolution of the self in a play of social roles where the constant flow of virtue in a structured economy of order is the object of desire.

6. LI, EXEMPLARITY, AND THE RECTIFICATION OF NAMES (ZHENGMING)

There is some dispute as to whether the doctrine of zhengming can be ascribed to Confucius, but I shall presume here that it can; it is in fact a central aspect to his dao (teaching) that there be a congruence between names, ming, and social reality, and the idea of correcting names is a good part of what his work is about. One related idea here is the correction also of behaviour. Names are not simply neutral tags attached to an objective world; they are value-laden indicators of patterns of conduct. Thus when Confucius says let a father be a father, a son be a son, he is calling attention to the aspects of value and normativity coded in these terms: meeting the roles they specify involves meeting a set of proprieties, a network of practices that can stretch to fit all eventualities [40]. These names - the full specification of social reality - have their origin in the work of the king as he translates

into hierarchical order the mandate of Heaven.

If the king names, then the king should correct names: this is the tenor of the authoritarianism Confucius endorses. Thus when he criticises the behaviour of the Chi clan, their usurpation of practices properly named only for the royal court, he himself does not re-name the clan leaders (as upstarts or insurgents) - nor do we find a powerful rhetoric of changed designation anywhere at work in the Analects: the need for rectification is shown at several points, but for Confucius to engage in re-naming would be to damage further the royal prerogatives he wishes to re-instate. Nonetheless, Confucius does show himself ready to refuse or endorse certain names in specific contexts, which raises questions concerning the kind of authority he reserved for himself as a prophet of the ancien regime.

Confucius saw himself as a successor to King Wen in the field of virtue [41]. In many traditions we know of a conflict between scribal and royal interests; indeed in Egypt the value of the scribe, as of his patron the god Thoth, and of writing as the scribal art, is designated as cunning: writing can make the world otherwise, can change records, just as it can trace the magic formulae to secure passage through death [42]. If Confucius is a successor to King Wen then he is a rival to the present Zhou rulers as the focus of heavenly order. This rivalry did not lead to the establishment of two competing and interacting realms of

moral and political value such as we find elsewhere (with Buddhism and Christianity, for instance, where the sangha and the church became orders alternative to that of the state); nonetheless, it does open a line of conflict that we shall find developed to some extent in Mencius. And certainly, if tradition is right, Confucius did not hesitat to take responsibility for a quasi-royal function, the re-naming (correct naming) of history, fulfilling this in his editorial work on the Chunqiu (Spring and Autumn Annals).

Getting names right is a prerequisite to action. Name someone wise and one can go to him for guidance; name him charlatan and one tries to expose his imposture; name this entity a fetus, or an unborn child, and one can judge a certain act to be simply clinical, or murder. In his re-naming the historical record - in his lifting a normative past from the flux of history, designating it tradition, and clearly separating heroes and villains - do we name Confucius a faithful interpreter of the Zhou past, or a despoiler, erasing from the record all that might be at variance with his ideal image of virtue's passage? In moralising the past Confucius seems continuous with that early Zhou practice which reduced the memory of the Shang to simply the form of the degenerate: this theft of the voice of the Shang, this portrayal of them solely in reprobate guise, is a central feature in King Wen's act of parricide. And while Confucius' move might be a more complex act, in

retaining the perceived heart of Zhou history, nonetheless the way this act reverberates in Confucius' understanding of authority and humanity, ren, is of crucial import.

We might complicate matters by suggesting - Confucius suggests it clearly himself - that the son has a duty of obedience to his parents in all things; not blind obedience, certainly, since the son can hold a certain corrective power, a power of reprimand, in reserve, but an obedience at least ready to mask parental wrongdoing [43]. In one case Confucius suggests that it is the appropriate li to cover for one's father, to maintain his face with the community, even when one knows him guilty of a certain "injustice" [44]. ("Injustice" has to be problematised, precisely because the act in question could not be defined as such - could not even perhaps be named as "theft" - from the perspective of Confucius's li) Here it is part of xiao (filial piety), but also part of ren as the practice of li, to mask, to conceal, to draw the veil of propriety over "injustice". Ren shows its particularised scope as family loyalty in the first instance, as protection of the family against others, rather than as behaviour expressive of a justice more universally founded.

In this example, the name of the father takes priority over any other name; one cannot re-name him "thief", and prosecute him; one preserves "father", and conceals him by honouring the relationship to the father. One question

which remains beyond resolution from the Analects is how far this game of protection goes, and whether in any circumstances the son has a right to obliterate the name "father" according to principles of a wider humanity. If a father is known, for instance, to have killed in a quest for power, can the son re-name him "murderer", and surrender him to the appropriate authorities? There is nothing in the Analects to suggest this possibility, while the weight of hierarchy tends against it: it is those with authority who have power over names, not those in subordiante position. Yet if Confucius can re-name history why can the son not re-name the father?

Part of the answer here might be that, as we have seen, the junzi has, through assiduous practice of li, earned the right to interpret and modify the rituals; this entails also the right to change names within a certain sphere of competence. Confucius claimed competence over history, particularly the power to recreate there an ideal father, but his role here is justified precisely as one of sonship, preserving the face of history-as-father; whereas the son, as son, has not learned, and can never learn, a competent authority over his father, while any act of exposing the father, perhaps delivering him to execution for wrongdoing, robs the son of continuity with his own past, insofar as he enters a future devoid of the father's ancestral role as transcendent intermediary and of his own continuing role as filial son.

There is little doubt that "legitimate" acts of parricide did occur at the time of Confucius; of interest here is the fact that they are ignored by him, and that no symbolic resource is developed to deal with the issues raised. In Greece, parricide (and matricide) is one of the central themes of tragedy. Orestes kills Clytaemnestra to avenge Agamemnon, and crucial in the dramatic sequence is Orestes' step into an abyss of horror, leading to a focussing of the conflict between two competing orders of justice, tribal/familial revenge and the new civil order of the emergent state. With Confucius the question of horror is avoided - not that it was not there in the fabric of his time, but he elides it in presenting himself as twin to a certain Nietzschean Socrates, the optimistic rational man - while any question of competing standards of virtue is also by-passed on the assumption that there is just one normative tradition, the teaching, dao, of the ancients [45].

7.EXEMPLARITY, EQUALITY AND THE ENDS OF MAN

With what degree of terror did Confucius live in the world, and by what means was this held at bay? If we know that a motif of terror - before heaven, before the king - was announced in the Shijing then how did Confucius assimilate and rationalise this in his own stance? (His reading of the Shijing seems rationalistic.) Fear and horror of the sort made manifest in tragedy (Greek or Shakespearean), and covered by Nietzsche in his reading of the Dionysiac, is in many philosophies the bass note of existence, known as a sense of radical finitude not just in

face of the ultimate dissolution of death, but in confrontation also with the force of difference at the heart of identity, with life as a play of incommensurable powers which muthos/logos attempts to order around a logic of the proper [46]. Any such ordered semiosis is a process of naming and dividing the powers of the world which is achieved at the cost of repression, and one which occurs as a necessary moment in any individual and social life. Insofar as Western philosophy has been structured around a rational order of being-as-identity (for Aquinas ens et unum convertuntur), the sense of non-being has regularly tended towards a thematic of sin, evil, and an original power of violence and disruption. In this framework the force of tragedy (a Western style of handling these themes that does not exist as a genre in China) can easily be read, with Aristotle, as a process of catharsis, a knowing release from horror through ritual re-enactment of the loss - in Oedipus for instance - of the cornerstone of order's edifice. Here we can follow Nietzsche's criticism of Aristotle and note that the normative moment of tragedy involves a step beyond catharsis, and a full entry into the horror of the void as a necessary moment of liberation [47].

Horror is perhaps simply a Western response to the void. Zhuangzi's critique of Confucius raises the possibility of non-identity as joyful release, rather than as terror [48]. In ways that we shall consider, Zhuangzi's otherwise close proximity to Nietzsche changes here (pace Nietzsche's joyful

wisdom) to a divergence that is rooted in a set of radically different, historically differently sedimented, approaches to non-being. For the moment, though, if Zhuangzi presents non-identity as release, as play, how does this allow us to read the basic stance of Confucius?

As with identity, non-identity has to be achieved: if the Buddhist monk looks with equanimity on the void, and on his loss of a sense of substantial self, this is the result of work, of proficient following of a teaching, a dao. Zhuangzi's dao, as a critique of the sense of self crystallised by Confucius and Mencius, allows us to focus the point here that, despite our earlier comments about self-effacement in the Analects, Confucius does organise a very powerful self, though one not dependent on a concept of the inner self, or on any psychological reference. He does not, then develop a theory of the mind or soul; instead he offers an account of the self in behavioural and social terms.

Confucius presents a profoundly extensive ego-ideal modified by the constraints of insertion within a social hierarchy, and by recognition of the mediating power of the king/emperor [49]. Thus, the sage-rulers of the past are presented as exemplary models, but the practical ideal to aspire to is that not of sagehood, sheng, but of nobility, junzi. To be a sage is ultimately to have the power to disrupt any given social order in the name of the true order of heaven. The sage by his virtue stands close to the mind

of heaven, and at a time when the mandate, tianming, was partially in eclipse - as it was in the mid-Zhou period - to recognise someone as sage would be to recognise a possibly alternative source of authority to that of the king [50]. Confucius' aim, on the contrary, was to strengthen royal Zhou authority. A somewhat similar problem of authority is found in Old Testament literature, with the solution - a distinction between true and false prophets - hinging on the question of legitimate access to the voice of God. In the Analects the solution is to suggest that sagehood indicates a distant, unattainable ideal; the practically feasible goal is that of junzi.

A corollary is that neither sage, nor indeed ruler, is presented in the Analects as a man of ren: ren is the virtue of those fully within the social hierarchy, but it is not a foundational principle in the way the word of Heaven, of the sage, or of the ruler is: this word is unquestionably foundational and as such requires not modification but implementation. In this framework it does not matter whether someone can be said consistently to be ren in action and disposition, since the sage is always more than ren; this will not win for them the designation "sage"; and if ren is a counsel of perfection it is such in a circumscribed rather than absolute sense. [50]

Confucius thus presents a partially limited ego-ideal, but one of tremendous power nonetheless, where a combination of the cultivation of virtue, ritual dexterity, imposing

(archaic) dress and demeanour, a mind disciplined by study and by chanting the odes, and a superior status in the social hierarchy, all conspire to make the word and gesture of the junzi powerfully efficacious. Within this one cannot read directly a sense of terror at the chance aspect of things, nor a sense of ideals wrested from a void beyond any determination of order and value: the accident and hazard of life in this sense are deferred into specific questions of management and change within an order whose fundamental structure is presupposed. The intense ritualism of divination we encountered in the Shang as a means of holding chaos at bay has by the time of Confucius (indeed, earlier) consolidated itself in a sense of the cosmos as ontologically secure, as fundamentally ritually ordered. Here the ideal of junzi as knowing and living with a ritual world can be posited as operational within a scheme of things, rather than foundational for it.

This still leaves unresolved the management of horror as it ruptures such a scheme: neither in a myth of original usurpation - whether by an Adam or Prometheus - nor in a ritualising of horror itself through the formulae of tragic repetition, do we find this issue addressed in the Analects. It may be, however, that a repeated and ritualised violence at the foundation of order constitutes the heart of darkness that Confucius knew. A line of reading here is suggested by Mozi, Confucius's first philosophic critic. Speaking against the waste involved in the expensive funerals which Confucius favoured he says:

> And as to those who are chosen to accompany the dead, in the case of a son of Heaven anywhere from several ten to several hundred persons will be sacrificed, while in the case of generals or high ministers the number will be from several to several tens.
> Mozi 25; Watson 1964:67

As we have noted, the archaeological record attests large-scale human sacrifice for the Shang, and the continuation of such practices well into the Zhou period [51]. Neither Confucius nor Mencius speak against these (Xunzi does), and it is crucial to know whether their philosophy is rooted, in part at least, in a presupposition of sacrificial violence. The shedding of blood in rituals, as in oaths of allegiance, was standard in Zhou China. As an expert in ritual affairs Confucius would certainly have known of this, as of the situation with human sacrifice; and while funerals for the Son of Heaven were not frequent, those for high ministers certainly were. Just as in Greece the rituals prototypically formative of tragedy served to establish order, and regularly to re-establish it, so perhaps for Confucius the ceremonial surrounding certain of the more solemn Zhou rituals provided that recurring sense of horror known and redeemed upon which an optimistic philosophy could rest.

Insofar as ritual violence belongs at the limit, in the sacred time of the foundations, there need not seem any necessary contradiction between it and the humanism it might found. Indeed, the space for contradiction is reduced virtually to zero, since the logic of foundations is a logic of repression that can only be undone at the limits, on the

threshhold of the founded order [52] . The significant point in reading Confucius here concerns not contradiction, but the use of rational violence in a continuing exclusion of the repressed: is Confucius simply an ethical humanist, an optimistic Socratic rationalist tout court, using the violence of hierarchizing reason to exclude ritual violence fromhe overt record, just as the original founding act of the Zhou dynasty is excluded - as violence - from the historical record; or does he wish that violence to be known regularly as the bass note above which the harmonies of order rise?

[An alternative reading, which stresses the function of ren as the articulation of a specifically human world, distinct from the gods and nature, would be that, in rationalising the rituals, as also the Odes, Confucius sought not to exclude the unpredictable power of the religious or holy, since this had already been rendered manageable within the ritual sphere, but to exclude a sense of the holy as such, to exclude any contact with horror and ecstasy. Since the burden of rationalisation in this latter position is greater than the Analects can bear - it could only be supported if Confucius were seen overtly to render null the powerful religious tone the li had for the Zhou - then I take the assumption that he validated li as in part religious ritual to stand.] That much said, the points at which the analects might be seen to tremble before a void of horror and dissolution are difficult to name.

If some practice of human sacrifice is pre-supposed, then this would clearly constitute one such. The remembrance of absent love - where memory arches over time and difference - is another. But perhaps most important here - and functioning in a similar mode to tragedy in Greece, is the ritualised three year mourning period for the death of parents. While it is not clear how many features of the following description Confucius would endorse, Mozi's account of some of the mourning rituals is worth noting:

> And what are the rules to be observed by the mourner? We are told that he must wail and cry in a sobbing voice at irregular intervals, wearing hemp mourning garments and with tears running down his face. He must live in a mourning hut, sleep on a straw mat, and use a clod of earth for a pillow. In addition he is urged not to eat so as to appear starved, to wear thin clothes so as to appear cold, to acquire a lean and sickly look and a dark complexion. His ears and eyes are to appear dull, his hands and feet lacking in strength, as though he had lost the use of them. And in the case of higher officials we are told that during a period of mourning they should be unable to rise without support or to walk without a cane. And all this is to last for three years. Mozi,25; Watson,1964:67-8.

It is clear from the details and extent of these practices that the real death of a parent (or other close relative) constitutes for the mourner his own extended ritual passage through death - he becomes a semi-recluse, semi-outcast, living on the borderlines, losing his separateness from the animal world, taking on the visage of a living corpse. Here in this chosen effacement, this dissolution of the face along the lines of grief, this disruption of ren as the balance and poise of life in a passage that goes at once to the heart of <u>ren</u> as the filial

relation, there is the knowledge of death in life, the burden of the filial as death itself - the name of the father as the name of death, and the passage of mourning as at once the exorcism of that name and the willing assumption of it as one's own in a return to the law of the community. Mourning here can be seen as an encounter with the energies met by the Greeks in tragedy, a Dionysiac passage through horror into a reborn world of Apollo. In part at least. For by means of a crucial difference here an encounter with violence (the sacrificial violence surrounding Iphigeneia; the violence of Oedipus) is excluded from the script of this process [53].

8. REN AND HUMAN NATURE

From the few overt uses of the Odes in the Analects it seems that Confucius rationalises their meaning in order to establish his own position; how extensively, it is difficult to say. One powerful instance opens here some further considerations.

> Zixia asked,
> "Her entrancing smile dimpling,
> Her beautiful eyes glancing,
> Patterns of colour upon plain silk.
> What is the meaning of these lines?"
> The Master said, "The colours are put in after the white."
> "Does the practice of the rites likewise come afterwards?"
> The Master said, "It is you, Sheng, who have thrown light on the text for me." An.3.8

Only a reading set on repressing the seductive power of beauty could find the meaning of these lines to be such as Confucius asserts. Yet the response he receives from Zixia

suggests a possible premise within his own philosophy, that of a given, untutored human nature: if patterns suggest rites, then plain white silk perhaps suggests a simple nature that later gets formed, shaped and differentiated. We only see debates on human nature emerging in subsequent writers - in Mencius, for instance, under the pressure of Gaozi's and Mozi's philosophies. Yet some assumption of a given nature might be there with Confucius, reinforced by other images and motifs. Even so, this would not be an assumption of original equality: the degrees of talent that individuals are born with varies in each case, and delimits the shaping, formative power of the rites [54].

We have stressed repeatedly the hierarchical nature of the rites, how they chart a way of life for an elite. We have no reason to conclude that those absent from the discourse of the Analects - women,peasants, craftsmen and traders insofar as they are concerned with material production rather than learning and diplomacy - are reckoned either to have a place in the value system Confucius presents, or to make any contribution to its symbolisation (a fact heightened by the different status these groups achieve with Laozi and Mozi) [55]. Since there is no overt position on an original human nature advocated by Confucius, the imagery and exlusions operative within such a concept do not concern us here; what is significant is the way these are at work in the ideal of human fulfilment represented by the junzi.

In speaking of the junzi - which we take also to be the locus for the full realisation of ren - Confucius delineates an ideal sphere of human operation within an existing and unquestioned world order; crucial here is that he does not represent the human ideal in terms of the sage, sheng. Implicated in this is Confucius' own attempt to refurbish the royal Zhou institutions, rather than inaugurate new ones through the power of the sage; and while one argument suggests that he saw himself fulfilling a messianic role, it seems better - in the absence of any references to him as sage - to identify his role as prophetic, but prophetic precisely for the old order. For Confucius to speak of himself or of any other contemporary as "sage" would be to acknowledge an alternative source of order to that of the Zhou king [56]. [By the same token, it is not the original foundations of order - the empires of the Xia and Shang - that Confucius aligns himself with, but the order of the Zhou. If he has a concept of a golden age, it is one within an already established and developing world order, rather than one at the beginnings or foundations. The sacred order of original time and original foundations is separate from the world he validates.]

Whilst the junzi is an examplar and preserver of elite values, the encounter with failure and non-recognition, with poverty and low social status, are not excluded from his lot - not included as experiences he should aspire to, as valuable and necessary tests of his virtue, but not excluded either since they are likely enough

occurences in an age of political turmoil and rapidly changing fortunes. Thus Confucius weds his daughter to a man in prison; he accepts his own lack of political success; he praises the junzi's equanimity in the face of poverty, making a virtue of the balance that remains undisturbed through changing circumstances; and he stresses the regular application to work in whatever context. While he speaks on occasion of destiny, ming, this is more to do with one's allotted life-span than with the particular fortunes of life encountered; it does not seem he would accept the Mencian formula which excludes from a junzi's destiny the possibility of death in prison.

The junzi then is a this-worldly ideal of learning and integrity, finding his appropriate fulfilment in political office, though on the assumption that office is simply a recognition of virtue already acquired: it is fulfilment of the claims of virtue - of learning, filiality, deference, ritual, and integrity (yi) - that is the goal of the junzi, and this can be realised even in straitened circumstances. Yet not perhaps in all circumstances, for it at least seems unlikely that each and every walk of life is compatible with being a junzi and achieving ren, as we have already indicated. While Confucius does not speak out against profit (li) in the way that Mencius does, he does disvalue it as a principle, and thereby also disvalues the life of those for whom profit is a necessary (though not the only) criterion of achievement: traders, craftsmen, farmers.

Furthermore, since it is doubtful that the lives of these would have been regulated by li (rituals) then the possibility of being a junzi, as of achieving ren, is excluded for them anyway. The point seems similarly true for women: while it is Mozi's opinion that later Confucians held their wives in inordinate esteem at least as regards the provision of mourning rituals [57] , it is nonetheless unlikely that women were active enough in learning, and in the more central social rituals, to be considered candidates for junzi by Confucius. Certainly no exemplary women figure in his table of heroes.

(i) The Junzi: Self-love, Community and Death

Within the ethic of the junzi it does not seem that self-love - so central and controversial a feature in Western value systems - is of any significance; at least, it is not thematised. We have noted that there is no strongly psychological imagery at work in the Analects; the notion of an inner self, a subject or soul, is not a matter of consideration, and a self thus understood is not affirmed as an object of love. But the self as agent, and the self as possessed and gathered in tranquillity, are powerfully figured, thus encouraging a broadening of the category "self-love" so that the dynamic of motivation which Confucius attributeso this self might be read as a manifestation of it. Negatively, the imagery of self-hatred, of self-loathing - the imagery tied in other systems to theologies of the self as evil or sinful - is absent from the Analects, as also is any emphasis on

asceticism - any emphasis, therefore, on the body and mind as powerfully unruly forces to be curbed and negated. This absence is perhaps paradoxically linked to the one space where an approach to asceticism does gain force - to the mourning rituals - though here the ruination of the body is less asceticism as such than an outworking of grief. It seems that the powerfully regulating force of the parents and ancestors, and of filiality, is taken to be such as to repress the unruly, thereby creating the space within which the specifically humane virtues might not only be operative, but hold court entirely. With this repression presumed, there is no division of good and evil, of holiness and sin, rupturing the operation of virtue in the Analects.

Within imagery of the self as active, in search of fulfilment, in a space stressing balance, where the body is a locus of profound respect, in a gathering and heightening of energies that would otherwise be lost, and where the self yet remains deferential, bowed before heaven and authority, in a world where the self meshes with others in an ideally harmonised play of social relations, it would be wrong to deny that there are strong considerations of self-love at play. Not egotistical; not reducible to a desire for status, for receipt of the love of others; but rooted in a concept of ren as life's full empowering, so that to raise oneself above the tedium of the day-to-day is to love self more fully.

Yet this self is inscribed in the play of a

world marked by the barrier of death. By contrast Plato's vision of love has its roots in a myth of the soul' full flowering after death. This transcendental intentionality is also powerfully present in Aquinas, and more so, since the community living beyond death, the communio sanctorum, is inwardly united in caritas, and in caritas is one also with the community of the ecclesial world. In the China of Confucius, as in the period before him, the orientation towards death is difficult to determine. The practice of calling back the soul of the recently dead person powerfully suggests that the beyond, even as the locus of ancestral power, was a locus of dread, so that the men of Zhou remained tied to the paths of this life, as were the Greeks of heroic and classical times before that onset of worldly pessimism which is the matrix of Plato's thought. Certainly for the Zhou the otherworld was not figured as a place where the dead might converse with the sages of the past. And as we have remarked, the bond of ren operates entirely within the configurations of the living human world; it does not reach into the beyond; and even xiao as a continuing disposition towards the parents after death is judged more in terms of continuing fidelity to their ways than as any transcendent bond.

CHAPTER 4

REN IN THE FRAMEWORK OF ZHOU DEBATES

1. MOZI ON JIAN'AI AND REN

It seems difficult by any criterion to speak of the Analects as philosophical, and less so of the Confucius hidden and dispersed within it, stripped of the voice of argument and the processes of reason - those attributes we normally judge philosophical - and wearing instead a hieratic, professorial garb, dispensing wisdom with the voice of authority; which was perhaps his own original voice, offering that knowledge which could only come from above, a human distribution of the wisdom of heaven. But that stance is no doubt as much shared by Heraclitus and Parmenides, whom in the West we do not usually hesitate to call philosophers. At least we can say of Confucius that he is proto-philosophical, taking a newly stated position and opening the space for subsequent debate [1].

Within that space Mozi appears as the first arguer given over to the critical rejection of another position - in this case that of Confucius himself. Active some years after the death of Confucius (he flourished in the late -5th century), and at first a follower of one Confucian school, Mozi speaks with a practical, military, technological and committedly religious voice against the conservative, scholarly, authoritarian scepticism of the

Confucian position. There is certainly a clash of class interests at work here - the parvenu practical theorist against defenders of the ancien regime - but that works out into significantly different stances on the use of reason, the nature of the state and social order, and the order of the cosmos. As Mozi argues, we find him engaging in a practice soon common to other Chinese philosophers, of caricature at the service of his own position. Since he was obviously highly familiar with the details of Confucian thought and life, it is difficult at times to distinguish caricature from reality in his portrayal of these; certainly he writes with the sentiments of a man disappointed in his former mentors.

Standardly, Mozi is taken to widen the scope of Confucian morality by substituting for what seemed a primarily familial concept of ren the broader concept of universal love, jian'ai, arguing for it on utilitarian grounds. [It had not been apparent from our reading of the Analects that, in speaking of ren, Confucius was speaking of family/clan relations in particular - indeed, ren could be partly read there as the bond between adult males in a given social group or class. The familial issue comes to the fore with Mozi, and with later Confucian responses to him.] Mozi thematises jian'ai by arguing for an actively engaged will of Heaven which is directly concerned to bestow favour on all; the extent to which Heaven on this reading functions as a foundational principle for ethics, in conflict with a utilitarian principle operative

elsewhere in the text, is a point to be considered. This apart, Heaven is at least seen as the instaurator and preserver of profoundly hierarchical social order - this much, with Confucius, is retained from the earlier tradition - so that any reading of jian'ai as socialism before the event is quite off the mark.

While interstate conflict was already a fact of life with Confucius, the havoc this could wreak at all levels of society was significantly more pronounced in Mozi's day than earlier - the designation of his time and the rest of the span of the Zhou as the Warring States period (-463 to -222) indicates this aptly - with the result that, in his and the texts of subsequent thinkers, certain topics became more direct matters of concern than hitherto. As lands were ravaged and harvests lost through war, issues of basic economic survival and preservation of life became predominant. Some withdrew from society - we meet these proto-Daoists already in the Analects - to preserve their qi (literally "breath", pneuma, then "life-force", "energy") and to avoid what seemed the inevitability of early death in the political arena. Others - Mozi to the fore - stressed the economic restructuring of society [2].

Central to Mozi's thinking here is the value of frugality. Certainly when he speaks on this it is partly with the voice of the worker whose goods must be well crafted if they are to sustain his livelihood - so that the merely decorative can seem misplaced and frivolous - and

here his fulminations against Confucian-backed indulgence spring more from a sense of indignation at waste than from any positively-felt spirit of asceticism. Thus, in arguing for new economic strategies (presenting these as a re-appropriation of ancient practices) he speaks against the court music-festivals - in reality, lavish large-scale entertainments involving a range of performing arts - and in so doing preserves the Confucian benevolent man (renren) as a moral yardstick:

> Therefore Mozi condemns music not because the sound of the great bells and rolling drums, the zithers and pipes is not delightful; not because the sight of the carvings and ornaments is not beautiful; not because the taste of the fried and broiled meats is not delicious; and not because lofty towers, broad pavilions, and secluded halls are not comfortable to live in. But though the body finds comfort, the mouth gratification, the eye pleasure, and the ear delight, yet if we examine the matter, we will find that such things are not in accordance with the ways of the sage kings, and if we consider the welfare of the world we will find that they bring no benefit to the common people. Therefore Mozi said: Making music is wrong!
>
> Now if the rulers and ministers want musical instruments to use in their government activities, they cannot extract them from the sea water, like salt, or dig them out of the ground, like ore. Inevitably, therefore, they must lay heavy taxes upon the common people before they can enjoy the sound of great bells, rolling drums, zithers, and pipes. In ancient times the sage kings likewise laid heavy taxes on the people, but this was for the purpose of making boats and carts,and when they were completed and people asked , "What are these for?" the sage kings replied, " The boats are for use on water, and the carts for use on land, so that gentlemen may rest their feet and laborers spare their shoulders." So the common people paid their taxes and levies and did not dare to grumble. Why? Because they knew that the taxes would be used for the benefit of the people. Now if musical instruments were also used for the benefit of the people, I would not venture to condemn them. Indeed, it they were as useful as the boats and carts of the sage kings, I would certainly not venture to

condemn them. Mozi,33;Watson 1964:110-11.
The chief criterion at work here - evidenced later in the essay and throughout the text - is utility or profit, li (the character 利, a compound of the characters for grain and knife , graphically conveys through the image of harvest the sense of profit for an agrarian community.) For Mozi, what matters is whether elite forms of life bring any practical advantage to the people as a whole - if not then, however intrinsically pleasurable, they are redundant.

A similar argument is developed against the extravagance of funerals. We have seen already how individuals could in mourning be brought near to death themselves through a surfeit of grief and asceticism. But there was also the question of material expenditure - the costly wood for coffins, the decorations, the grave goods - which time and again in later Chinese history become an almost overwhelming burden for filial sons. On both these scores Mozi is outspoken, arguing again for modest expenditure if the will of Heaven to benefit the people is to be effected [3].

(i) Universal Love, Utility, and the Will of Heaven

Through his arguments for jian'ai (universal love) Mozi preserves and strengthens the value of social hierarchy in two different ways: he claims, in a combination of utilitarian and natural law positions, that Heaven wills hierarchy as the efficient means whereby love is to be

distributed, adding that it is a natural feature of human psychology for persons to wish to exist within hierarchical relationships [4] ; and he claims that the expression of love by the individual, insofar as it transcends immediate family relationships in order to address the needs of all, serves precisely, in the response of love that it elicits, to render the family - and indeed, any social - bond more secure:

> I know for the following reason that Heaven loves the people generously: It sets forth one after another the sun and moon, the stars and constellations to lighten them; it orders the four seasons, spring, fall, winter, and summer, to regulate their lives; it sends down snow and frost, rain and dew, to nourish the five grains, hemp, and silk, so that the people may enjoy the benefit of them [5]. It lays out the mountains and rivers, the ravines and valley streams, and makes known all affairs so as to ascertain the good or evil of the people. It establishes kings and lords to reward the worthy and punish the wicked, to gather together metal and wood, birds and beasts, and to see to the cultivation of the five grains, hemp, and silk, so that the people may have enough food and clothing. From ancient times to the present this has always been so.....Heaven loves the world universally and seeks to bring mutual benefit to all creatures...If someone kills an innocent person, then Heaven will send down misfortune upon him....There are those who, by living and benefiting others and obeying the will of heaven, have won Heaven's reward...They (the sage kings of the Three Dynasties of antiquity) devoted themselves to universality and shunned partiality. Universality means that if one is in a large state he will not attack a small state, and if one is a member of a large family he will not overthrow a small family. The strong will not oppress the weak, the many will not bully the few, the cunning will not deceive the stupid, and the eminent will not lord it over the humble. Examining such a policy, we find that it brought benefit to Heaven above, to the spirits in the middle realm, and to man below. And because, of these three types of benefits, there were none that were not realized, it was called heavenly virtue. All the fairest names in the world were given to such a ruler, and people said, "This is benevolence (ren); this is righteousness (yi)! This is what it means to love and benefit others, to obey the will of Heaven, and to win Heaven's reward!"

Mozi,27; Watson, 1964:88-90.

Far from rejecting Confucian ren in favour of jian'ai, Mozi usurps the Confucian position by retaining the benevolent man (renren) as a primary moral agent within his own philosophy, but more markedly he argues that it is precisely jian'ai that is the fulfilment of the Confucian virtues of benevolence and righteousness (yi) [6]. Confucianism is presented as degenerate in terms of its support of material extravagance in a time of dire economic straits; it is judged to be partisan in relation to the narrowness of its clan and family concerns which neglect the needs of society as a whole; and it is reckoned to be inconsistent in its code of conduct, insofar as this finds expression in the rites (li).

Mozi's stance on jian'ai emerges strongly in the two examples he uses to present his case, those of the universally minded man (jianshi) and the universally minded ruler (jianjun) [Shi is translated here as 'man', though it does not have the same scope that is normally associated with the terms ren and min; it refers to that class of scholar-officials and knights (or mercenaries) who, in growing numbers in the Zhou period, relied on their skill in order to secure a living. If we take it that ren and min still residually refer to aristocracy and peasantry (though even in Mozi these terms are used fairly indiscriminately), then shi refers to a relatively independent skill-based group incorporating workers of both

aristocratic and peasant background [7]].

In presenting the jianshi (and the jianjun, though here to a lesser extent) Mozi creates a limit-situation in order to focus the argument. A man is preparing for war, and must leave his family in the care of others. Even if he is a partially-minded man (bieshi - one who discriminates in favour of his own rather than others) the exigency of his situation requires that he entrust his dependents to a jianshi if they are to be properly treated - entrusting them to a bieshi such as himself will ensure that they receive only second-rate treatment. The stance of the jianshi, then, is not so much one of altruism tout court, as of enlightened self interest, do ut des. And in the choices forced upon him in extremis the bieshi is forced to acknowledge the contradiction at the heart of his own position: taking his stance entirely in self-interest is the surest way of defeating his own deepest interest in a situation of crisis.

Mozi presents his case, here as elsewhere, in a combination of appeal through argument to the inherent rational superiority of his own stance, and appeal through testimony to the congruence of his thinking with the traditions of the sages. If he argues for working to benefit (li) others, it is not on the basis of a calculation of profit or loss (there is no trace here of Bentham's calculus: even though utilitarian, this would be too close to the style of the bieshi for Mozi, though his

system as a whole is specifically utilitarian in a sense which we have already begun to examine). While Mozi takes his stance in a rational manner, it is not so much moral agency as rational deliberation, but moral agency as "instinctive" response, that is uppermost in his thinking. He does not develop the later Mencian notion of a moral heart (xin) with its instinctive sense of right and wrong; but it is - in contrast to the detailed deliberations and codifications of behaviour constellated around Confucian li - on that notion of simplicity which came to be expressed by Mencius that he wishes to focus. Here his various arguments about frugality come to a point: the aim is to live in a simpler world where moral imperatives are felt and responded to without any difficulty, and where one responds to those in need insofar as needs are apparent. Even if do ut des, the element of calculation is at a minimum, and the ideal is a reciprocity premissed on a capacity to take the viewpoint of others:

> If men were to regard the states of others as they regard their own, then who would raise up his state to attack the state of another? It would be like attacking his own. If men were to regard the cities of others as they regard their own, then who would raise up his city to attack the city of another? It would be like attacking his own. If men were to regard the families of others as they regard their own, then who would raise up his family to overthrow that of another? It would be like overthrowing his own. Now when states and cities do not attack and make war on each other and families and individuals do not overthrow or injure one another, is this a harm or a benefit to the world? Surely it is a benefit.
>
> When we inquire into the cause of such benefits, what do we find has produced them? Do they come about from hating others and trying to injure them? Surely not! They come rather from loving others and trying to benefit them. And when we set out to classify and

> describe those men who love and benefit others, shall we say that their actions are motivated by partiality or by universality? Surely we must answer, by universality, and it is this universality in their dealings with one another that givbes rise to all the great benefits in the world. Watson 1964:40.

The argument on the jianjun consolidates these points, whilst introducing an important further feature. If men (shi) have to choose a leader (jun) will they choose one who is self-interested, or one who sacrifices self for the well being of others? Again the point seems obvious: the state cannot be well ordered if the ruler is out for his own advantage; and even if individuals in their own lives approve of partiality (bie), nonetheless in a ruler they seek universality [8].

When Mozi speaks of the shi choosing a leader he might seem to perceive society in a proto-democratic way. It does seem likely that, in the particular brotherhood of shi to which he belonged, the election of a leader by those of a certain status was practice; furthermore, in his example here he talks about choosing the leader of a state (as opposed to a non-territorial group. The distinction is important, for much of the ruler's authority was precisely tied to his ability to relate to the transcendent powers of the land, as represented by the altars of soil and grain. A ruler of a community without a territorial base would obviously have a different transcendent support for his authority). Nonetheless, there is no evidence elsewhere that he thought the wang (king) should be elected; and whether elected or not, he clearly expected that the

individual would fill a role in a hierarchy which had been specifically appointed and sanctioned by Heaven, and whose form it was not for him to change (other than by retrieving the forgotten practices of the sage kings). In this sense, kingship as an institution is ordained by Heaven, and individual kings are approved in authority by Heaven [9].

Mozi gives considerable space (three chapters or sections) to the value of hierarchical order, of identifying with superiors (shangtong). He also stresses how Tian established hierarchy to benefit the people (li ren), and how the spirits of the other world support hierarchy by checking on its maintenance; here we have a doctrine of active providence supporting a theological version of natural law founded on the principle of universal utility [10]. Here we can call Mozi a system-utilitarian in attention to this fact, that the human social order taken as a whole exists for the sake of universal benefit as this is judged from a theological point of view, the purpose of human action being to promote and sustain this order in its essential detail.

(ii) Love, Pleasure, Desire and Justice.

Various terms distinguish different forms or aspects of love in the Western tradition. Mozi's jian'ai (together with ren, as Mozi shifts its interpretation [11]) seems at first very close to the concept of agape in the Christian scriptures: a theologically derived capacity for universal love modelled on the exemplary power of God as loving creator. In further congruence with this Mozi presents

jian'ai as altruism going to the point of self-sacrifice; as non self-affirmation; as active concern for the oppressed and marginal; as sublimation of individual desire in favour of the common good; as the legitimate sharing of pleasure without extravagance in a harmonious community; and as, if not entailing pacifism, then practically directed towards the curtailment of aggression [12].

If from a Confucian point of view jian'ai is a movement of excess towards death, in destruction of the particularity of the family, for Mozi Confucian familialism is the very inscription of death within life, nowhere more graphically marked than in the excess almost unto death of the mourning rituals. If for Confucius it is the burden of culture and of memory that must be preserved if the human world is to keep its edge over barbarism - marking the living body with the dead letters of a stored and sacred script so that the body might live in that particular memory of death which is the only worthy form of life - then for Mozi, calling on memory only to witness what is already rationally known, in the presence of the unchanging light of Heaven which measures affairs and judges their rightness with the precision of geometry, forming thus a rational standard outside scripture, it is the removal of suffering in all its more obviously treatable forms that is a pre-requisite to any culture. Given the shift in authority and the shift in intention, Mozi's incorporation of ren within jian'ai is in fact a significant shift in the

ways ren might be understood. If for Confucius ren was in strong part linked with li - thus with scriptural authority and pedagogy - with Mozi ren through jian'ai appears (though nowhere is this argued) as an innate disposition, the tendency of a rational mind which is relatively unhindered by the claims of the past.

One leader of the Mohist school demonstrated sharply the rupture with Confucianism, surrendering his own son to death for wrongdoing (thus depriving himself of that permanent Confucian value, a lineage) in order that the claims of a rational justice might be met. While the act may have overtones of the sacrifice almost required of Abraham, the differences are significant. In the biblical story, particularly as read by Kierkegaard, it is the irrationality of God that is to the fore, the absolute authority of God to command whatever, and to make that act worthy by his command. God here is the inscrutable lord over individual conscience. For Mozi, the will of Heaven lies in the public domain, compelling for its simplicity in establishing the best of possible social orders and orientating that toward the human good].

If love as a form of selflessness is affirmed by Mozi, love as self-seeking, as positive self-love, love as the pursuit of pleasure, or love as erotic quest for one's ideal self or partner, or as quest for union with Heaven or the spirits, is absent from the scene (though ren as an active expression of gratitude to Heaven, mediated through

religious sacrifice, is stressed). It is true that two very strong ideal selves are presented: for the jianshi the gaoshi (lofty or exalted shi) is his ideal image, just as for the jianjun it is the mingjun (enlightened or illustrious ruler). These two are heroic images historically exemplified (and more in accord, despite the martial aspect to Mozi, with the culture heroes of Confucius than with the heroes of war) [13]. But the quest for realisation of the ideal is not thematised reflexively in terms of its psychological or ontological components, as it is for instance in Plato's discourse on eros. Nor is it presented in the erotic quest imagery favoured not long after Mozi in the Chuci (Songs of the South). Instead it is presented pragmatically, in terms of the tasks exemplified by gaoshi or mingjun alike, tasks which are directly assumed as their proper concern by jianshi and jianjun.

[It is interesting that Mozi situates the jianshi in a battlefield scenario not in order to promote martial virtue, but rather to set in focus the true significance and import of civic virtue. The scene of war thus receives a significantly different status from that ascribed to it in the Iliad and the Bhagavad Gita, where, in different ways, the centrality of martial virtue is affirmed and consolidated.[14]]

If Mozi is against excess, he seems definitely for the types of pleasure that harmonise with civic order. Yet

nowhere do we find a strong sense of this pleasure in his text, in contrast to the pleasures positively affirmed by Confucius. Vagaries of temperament apart, it is in strong measure a difference of class background that can be presumed here: Confucius enjoying that leisure presupposed by an elite group in order to appreciate music, archery, and cultured discussion, Mozi knowing the discipline of hard work and frugality if he is to make a living as a practical man. This difference raises one crucial question on jian'ai. To Mao Zedong, jian'ai as expressed by Mozi is an impossible and premature virtue: its only plausible place is in a classless society, yet Mozi is situated in a feudal age:

> it is a basic Marxist concept that being determines consciousness, that the objective realities of class struggle and national struggle determine our thoughts and feelings. But some of our comrades turn this upside down and maintain that everything ought to start from "love". Now as for love, in a class society there can be only class love; but these comrades are seeking a love transcending classes, love in the abstract and also freedom in the abstract. From "Yenan Forum on Literature and Art, 1942" in Mao Zedong, Vol.3,pp.73-4.

Mozi might claim to have handled this problem by separating the questions of hierarchy and class: hierarchy is preserved as the indispensable structuring of society in the interests of the maximum good of all, with each role in the hierarchy being filled according to merit; class is abolished as the unnecessary (and immoral) preservation of status and privilege without talent. And a confirmation of this step might be seen in the Mohist creation of an ideal, knightly, quasi-religious community existing under its own leader, a community - in principle of merit - cutting

across received social divisions yet preserving their ideal hierarchy, a community thus corresponding in some way to a church or sangha. Here the creation of a new social order, in contrast to Confucius' transformation of an old order, marks the specific space within which the Mohist ethic might claim to be operative.

Yet there are difficulties in this reading. Firstly, jian'ai is presented simply as airen, loving others, with no qualification on background, status, membership of the Mohist order, or otherwise. Secondly, the critiques of contemporary practice (against Confucius, against music, against funerals, against excess) obviously situate the practice of jian'ai within the larger society, as transformations of it. And thirdly - Mao's criticism here has most force [15] - Mozi provides no options for dealing with the recalcitrant element in society: for example, should the jianshi show jian'ai to instransigently particularist Confucians, thus doubly disadvantaging himself by caring for a group that is always going to take care of its own interests first anyway, whilst depriving himself and his own of any reciprocal response? A balance between love and justice is not here considered. [Though it is for the jianjun, who is through force of authority in a position to alter social practice in the direction of jian'ai. Yet on this it is a paradox that Mozi and his followers do not aspire to public office in the manner of the Confucians. The status of Mozi's rhetoric on jian'ai is thus more visionary than pragmatic in relation to the

given contemporary order of society].

2. LAOZI'S REJECTION OF REN

If Mozi preserves ren within a broader moral framework, Laozi rejects ren as mere adornment and decoration, the (degenerate) supplementarity of culture set on an originally good and simple nature, the (perhaps necessary) completion of a spoiled innocence, though permanently secondary, never effecting the restitution of loss but barring the way against further degradation.

> When the great dao falls into disuse
> There are benevolence (ren) and rectitude (yi);
> When cleverness emerges
> There is great hypocrisy;
> When the six relations are at variance
> There are filial children;
> When the state is benighted
> There are loyal ministers.
> Daodejing 18; Lau,1976:74

> Exterminate the sage, discard the wise,
> And the people will benefit a hundredfold;
> Exterminate benevolence (ren), discard rectitude (yi),
> And the people will again be filial;
> Exterminate ingenuity, discard profit,
> And there will be no more thieves and bandits.
> These three, being false adornments, are not enough
> And the people must have something to which they can attach themselves:
> Exhibit the unadorned and embrace the uncarved block,
> Have little thought of self and as few desires as possible.
> Daodejing,19; Lau,1976:75.

At one point ren is specifically excluded from the attributes either of Heaven and earth, or of the sage:

> Heaven and earth are ruthless (buren) and treat the myriad creatures as straw dogs; the sage is ruthless (buren), and treats the people as straw dogs.
> Daodejing,5; Lau 1976:61

It is not clear who is under attack at this point: Confucius, as we have seen, calls neither Heaven nor the sages ren, while linking both as foundational principles of morality. Laozi wants to say that this foundation is not original but, like the later layers of habitation established progressively on a first site, or the writing on a palimpsest, secondary; it is to the first site or the first writing, to the uncarved block before the imposition of form or the newborn child before the imposition of culture, that he wishes to return, presenting a network of images which argue the superiority of (a certain) nature over (a certain) culture. Many of these are expressive of an individualist ethic directed to the preservation of one's qi, but in one famous example Laozi offers an instance of communal agrarian simplicity: stripped of the adornments of culture, villagers will happily live within the confines of their community knowing that others live nearby, but not desiring to visit them:

> Bring it about that the people will return to the use of
> the knotted rope,
> Will find relish in their food
> And beauty in their clothes,
> Will be content in their abode
> And happy in the way they live.
> Though adjoining states are within sight of one another,
> and the sound of dogs barking and cocks crowing in one state
> can be heard in another, yet the people of one state will grow
> old and die without having had any dealings with those of another.
> Daodejing,80; Lau,1976:142

This form of emptying, this reduction of culture to a

point of stasis, has its ominous aspect, expressed particularly in the sage's mandate to empty the minds and fill the bellies of the people, thus keeping them free from desire. Laozi, here and elsewhere, sits ambiguously close to the Legalist solution to social reconstruction, apparently granting an absolute value to authority (rather than freely elective desire) to effect a return to simplicity. This stance is reminiscent of an aspect of the Shang's first rise to supreme power. In cultures other than China the emergence of urbanism is linked to an increase in agricultural productivity generating a surplus of wealth. In China, such an increase is not evident; what occurs instead is a rapidly developed powerful stratification of society, by means of which an elite group came to expropriate the labour and produce of the mass of the people, maintaining them at a barely subsistence level whilst granting themselves the luxuries of urban life [16]. Certainly Laozi does not recommend the power of an elite in this way - simplicity, as argued for, is a value for all - but his is nonetheless far from being a vision of individualist anarchy. He seems nowhere to question the value of hierarchy - certainly he assumes the importance of the sage and ruler as figures of authority - but seeks instead to transform the functioning of hierarchy through the medium of a leadership committed to non-aggrandisement:

> The best of all rulers is but a shadowy presence to his subjects
> Next comes the ruler they love and praise;
> Next comes one they fear;
> Next comes one with whom they take liberties.

When there is not enough faith, there is lack of good faith.
Hesitant, he does not utter words lightly.
When his task is accomplished and his work done
The people all say, "It happened to us naturally."
Daodejing,17; Lau,1976:73

It is the emphasis on simplicity that marks his chief divergence from Confucian ren. Linked as it is to li, to a complex mass of behavioural requirements, the repertoire of skills needed for richly civilised living, ren is at the antipodes of "natural" life. As implicated in the refinements of culture, ren is the kind of (artficial) accomplishment which men come to desire, just as they come to desire jade, fine clothes, and political power. Culture for Laozi is a form which, through its complexity and refinements generates desire, and through desire conflict. The rejection of culture is also the rejection of desire, in return to a presumed original state of freedom from desire:

I alone am inactive and reveal no signs,
Like a baby that has not yet learned to smile,
Listless as though with no home to go back to...
The multitude all have a purpose.
I alone am foolish and uncouth.
Daodejing,20; Lau,1976:76-7.

The nameless uncarved block
Is but freedom from desire,
And if I cease to desire and remain still
The empire will be at peace of its own accord.
Daodejing,37; Lau,1976:96.

Yet here one of Laozi's favoured metaphors sorely betrays him; for the newborn child, far from being an instance of non-desire, is perhaps the profoundest moment known of importunate desire requiring instant gratification.

Indeed, on this point culture can be seen as the very process whereby individual desire becomes reduced and regulated, in the emergence of a (relatively) non-conflictual social order.

Confucius, as we have seen, implicates ren within a patriarchal politeia. Laozi, oppositely, presents us with the idealisation of a set of feminine attributes - it is perhaps here that we should locate his stress on the virtue of compassion, ce, as a more receptively empathetic, mothering place, in contrast with the socially active beneficence of ren [17] . But the feminine in Laozi is presented in the male philosophical text. This need not in itself be a mark of expropriation - on the assumption that there is a voice of the woman, specifically, which is not available to the man, a voice which is excluded from the sphere of male discourse but which belongs in secret to the common comprehension of women, is a problematic one to unfold - but the way in which the image of woman valorises the options of lowliness and humility, of non-striving (wu-wei), of contentment with one's (lowest) lot certainly bears implications not only for one's vision of society, but for one's placing of women within it. Laozi may have been speaking from a part-shamanist background which ascribed high value to women. His philosophy, however, can easily be given an interpretation whereby the reduction of society to the "feminine" becomes a reduction favouring totalitarian control[18].

The safeguard against this, as we have already indicated, is the sage or ruler; each of these figures bears a paradoxical status. The injunction against desire means there is no idealisation of the sage as a figure for emulation: what the sage should be like is often enough stated, but why one should wish to be sage (indeed, wish to be anything of status) is nowhere evident. Contrary to a desire for status, the move to relinquish it - even to relinquish rulership - is affirmed as an appropriate step towards simplicity. Here we find a paradox of desire similar to that in the Buddha's teaching: the problems of life stem from desire, yet one must also desire nirvana and simplicity, as release from desire and its problems. Laozi is able to proceed in this manner, offering a wisdom that reverses Confucian stereotypes, precisely because those stereotypes are there: Confucianism (rather than Mohism which nowhere seems to be strongly implicated in the Daodejing) is the framework for thinking about society against which Laozi pits himself, arguing as much by way of negative dialectic as positive affirmation.

With Confucius as the principle object of attack, it is not clear how far Laozi's text stands in its own right as a piece of social philosophy, and how far it serves the purely polemic, but aporetic purpose of deflating the pretensions of its opponent. Most readings of Laozi find him providing a natural law philosophy, a philosophy of radical equality, with its foundations in a law of the

cosmos (Dao) whose way is precisely humility, non-assertion, change and transformation: the sage is one who knows how to adapt to situations, rather than one who actively bends life to his own will. Much of this depends on an ontological reading of the word dao which has recently been challenged; in contrast, it has been suggested that dao simply means "teaching", in particular "prescriptive teaching for the conduct of life". Thus, Confucius and Mozi both offer daos, as do other teachers, and the famous opening lines of the Daodejing should be read as affirming an inevitable pluralism of teachings. Rather than translate in the manner of Lau 1976:57

> The way that can be spoken of
> Is not the constant way;
> The name that can be named
> Is not the constant name.

we would instead be better advised to translate thus:

> Any dao that can be spoken is not constant;
> Any name that can be named is not constant.

Laozi appears in this light more as a philosopher of language, with claims about the way in which language in fact gets used, than as a metaphysician or natural law theorist [19]. Against the Confucian (and Mohist) attempt to establish one single, constant dao, fixed in the immutability of heaven and the constancy of its regard for man, or in a single normative tradition of the sages, he urges the changeability of teachings, as adaptations to different needs and contexts. Precisely what he does not provide is a constant Way modelled on the unchanging Way of nature, which persists through seasonal and diurnal

transformations (and is thus comparable to the way of Parmenides, who sought the constancy of Being within the flux of becoming). It is instead flux, change, inconstancy that Laozi valorises.

In doing so, however, he does not present his own dao as a rival to that of Confucius. Rather, he systematically and paradoxically brings the opposites of Confucian valuation to the fore, using his text as an X-ray device to reverse the normal distribution of light and darkness. He does not recommend the reversed image as a new dao - this, precisely, is why he does not recommend the value of sagehood - but rather lets those aspects of life discarded by Confucius (and Mozi) insinuate themselves as worthy of election. His text establishes the space within which a significantly new type of choice might occur [20].

3.MENCIUS' REFORMULATION OF REN.

In the face of Mohist and Daoist critiques, Mencius (-372? to -289?), St. Paul to Confucius' Jesus, Plato to Confucius' Socrates, offers a reformulation of ren that distinguishes it from jian'ai, confirms its status as a foundational virtue, separates it from the practice of li, inserts it as an innate disposition in an essentially good human nature, recognises it as the primary attribute of the ruler, and specifically affirms that a new sagely ruler is required if a political dispensation based on ren is to be achieved.

In contrast with Confucius, the features of a complex new philosophical situation are to the fore in Mencius' text. Where Confucius had a more "intellectually" intuitive reading of ren - ren as the immediate, practical, right response in any given situation - Mencius situates ren as an intuition of the heart (xin), not thereby severing affective from intellectual dispositions (xin combines both, and is more appropriately translated mind-and-heart), but nonetheless giving a primacy to the affective in the life of the individual. This move is a response to Mozi in particular, insofar as his discourse on jian'ai began to open an affective space which was simply absent for the Analects. In identifying that space as xin, and thematizing it in a way that Mozi does not, Mencius situates affectivity at the root of Confucian morality.

At the same time his theory of the heart is an important reversal of certain claims in Laozi's philosophy - a matter of no small interest, insofar as Mencius is as much Daoist as Confucian in some of his basic attitudes. His famous parable on the original goodness of the heart enables us to see part of his approach:

> Mencius said, "There was a time when the trees were luxuriant on the Ox Mountain. As it is on the outskirts of a great metropolis, the trees are constantly lopped by axes. Is it any wonder that they are no longer fine? With the respite they get in the day and in the night, and the moistening by the rain and dew, there is certainly no lack of new shoots coming out, but then the cattle and sheep come to graze upon the mountain. That is why it is as bald as it is. People, seeing only its baldness, tend to think that it never had any trees. But can this

> possible be the nature of a mountain? Can what is in man be completely lacking in moral inclinations? A man's letting go of his true heart (xin) is like the case of the trees and the axes. When the trees are lopped day after day, is it any wonder that they are no longer fine? If, in spite of the respite a man gets in the day and in the night and of the effect of the morning air on him, scarcely any of his likes and dislikes resemble those of other men, it is because what he does in the course of the day once again dissipates what he has gained. If this dissipation happens repeatedly, then the influence of the air in the night will no longer be able to preserve what was originally in him, and when that happens, the man is not far removed from an animal. Others, seeing his resemblance to an animal, will be led to think that he never had any native endowment. But can that be what a man is genuinely like? Hence, given the right nourishment there is nothing that will not grow, and deprived of it there is nothing that will not wither away. Mencius 6A.8; Lau 1983:164-5.

Laozi suggested that original goodness is like the uncarved block, devoid of characteristics: Mencius claims that the absence of characteristics, like the baldness of the mountain, marks the destruction of an original goodness that would normally grow to fruition given the right conditions. Such natural growth is something profoundly absent from Laozi: although on occasion he speaks of returning to the root, it is much more towards a nature devoid of growth that he gestures towards, a winter landscape that still admits the river's movement but shows precious little sign of life besides [21.

[Laozi images nature as the great mother, but primarily as the disengaged, inactive (wu-wei) mother, little stressing her nutritive or generative aspect. The individual can seek to become again as a newborn child, and thus find for him/herself an original nourishing that seems to be withdrawn in the journey beyond infancy, but the active

provision of nourishment by nature (or the dao, if we allow a substantive aspect to the term) is minimally evident. Indeed, in emphasising the non-ren aspect to Heaven and Earth (Tiandi) Laozi focusses on the cruel,devouring mother, the castrating mother that resents the passage through law to social order and withdraws its favour if the law (as culture, wen) is appropriated. Here as a mirror of the patriarchal father the mother becomes a phallic mother, the fate and necessity of life that will brook no other, the all devouring mother that would consume its own rather than see them live under the heteronomous autonomy of the law. By contrast the Confucian law, as read by Mencius, becomes generative in a non-coercive way [22].

Mencius claims that there are four living seeds or shoots (si duan) to the heart which under the right conditions come to fruition in the four primary virtues of ren, yi (righteousness), li (ritual) and zhi (wisdom). What constitutes the right conditions is crucial: in contrast to Confucius it is not li or any obvious style of pedagogy that counts (Mencius proclaims his relative ignorance of li)[23], but the creation instead of economic stability and prosperity, the responsibility for this being part of the mandate laid on the humane or benevolent ruler. (Mencius also assumes the provision of schooling, but its status in his text and distribution in society is difficult to determine.) On economics, for instance, he remarks:

> If you do not interfere with the busy seasons in the fields, then there will be more grain than the people

> can eat; if you do not allow nets with too fine a mesh to be used in large ponds, then there will be more fish and turtles than they can eat; if hatchets and axes are permitted in the forests on the hills only in the proper seasons, then there will be more timber than they can use. When the people have more grain, more fish and turtles than they can eat, and more timber than they can use, then in the support of their parents when they are alive and in the mourning of them when they are dead, they will be able to have no regrets over anything left undone. This is the first step along the Kingly way. If the mulberry is planted in every homestead of five mu of land, then those who are fifty can wear silk; if chickens, pigs and dogs do not miss their breeding season, then those who are seventy can eat meat; if each lot of a hundred mu is not deprived of labour during the busy seasons, then families with several mouths to feed will not go hungry. Exercise due care over the education provided by the village schools, and discipline the people by teaching the duties proper to sons and younger brothers, and those whose heads have turned grey will not be carrying loads on the roads. When those who are seventy wear silk and eat meat and the masses are neither cold nor hungry, it is impossible for their prince not to be a true King.
> Now when food meant for human beings is so plentiful as to be thrown to dogs and pigs, you fail to realize that it is time for garnering, and when men drop dead from starvation by the wayside, you fail to realize that it is time for distribution. When people die, you simply say, "It is none of my doing. It is the fault of the harvest." In what way is that different from killing a man by running him through, while saying all the time, "It is none of my doing. It is the fault of the weapon." Stop putting the blame on the harvest and the people of the whole Empire will come to you [24].
>
> Mencius 1A.3; Lau 1983:51-2

This stance marks a strong faith in the original goodness of human nature - a point Mencius defends against Gaozi, and illustrates at various stages in his writing [25] - together with the assumption that the heart possesses a natural inclination or dynamism towards a moral fulfilment or telos. Mencius thus shows little knowledge of the individual burdened by the weight of his own moral weakness or incompetence (a notion that is

evident to a certain extent in the Analects), nor a sense of the individual divided within himself in a fundamental moral conflict of the sort expressed by St. Paul and Plato. If left to flourish the individual is coherent, autonomous, and instinctively moral; and learning here constitutes the way to renew one's original resources:

> Mencius said, "Benevolence (ren) is the heart of man, and rightness his road. Sad it is indeed when a man gives up the right road instead of following it and allows his heart to stray without enough sense to go after it. When his chickens and dogs stray, he has sense enough to go after them, but not when his heart strays. The sole concern of learning is to go after this strayed heart. That is all."
> Mencius 6A 11; Lau,1983:167.

For Mencius the individual also inclines affectively towards his own kin:

> Mencius said, "The content of benevolence (ren) is the serving of one's parents; the content of dutifulness (yi) is obedience to one's elder brothers; the content of wisdom (zhi) is to understand these two and hold fast to them; the content of the rites (li) is the regulation and adornment of them; the content of music (yue) is the joy that comes of delighting in them." Mencius 4A 27; Lau 9183:127.

Here and elsewhere Mencius distinguishes ren as familial virtue for the universalism of jian'ai, arguing against Mozi in a critique that also goes against the Mohist idea of benefit (li). For Mencius it is the idea of graded love rather than universal love that is paramount: the family is the immediate and irreducible context for demonstration of affection and loyalty, and the movement of affection is outward from the family towards the larger society:

> Treat the aged of your own family in a manner befitting their venerable age and extend this

> treatment to the aged of other families; treat your own young in a manner befitting their tender age and extend this to the young of other families, and you can roll the Empire on your palm. Mencius 1A 7; Lau 1983:56
>
> Mencius said, "What a man is able to do without having to learn it is what he can truly do; what he knows without having to reflect on it is what he truly knows. There are no young children who do not know loving their parents, and none of them when they grow up will not know respecting their elder brothers. Loving one's parents is benevolence (ren); respecting one's elder brothers is rightness (yi). What is left to be done is simply the extension of these to the whole Empire." Mencius 1A 15; Lau 1983:184.

Here Mencius re-emphasises the role of the father, as if this had been undermined by Mozi; (he also reinstates the Confucian emphasis on lavish funerals). Yet from Mozi's point of view jian'ai, far from weakening the position of the father - or of any member of the family - strengthens it by ensuring a comprehensive framework of reciprocity. The difference between Mozi and Mencius here more concerns the social framework within which reciprocity might be operative. Mozi, paralleling steps towards democracy in classical Greece - where disruption of clan authority led to the Athenian order of adult free males meeting in assembly - established a community of shi that cut across the order of the clan (indeed, many of his followers, being of artisan background, would have no class affiliation anyway). Mencius sought to reinstate clan order as the backbone of society.

In doing so, he actually incorporated a good deal of Mohist thinking whilst rejecting Mozi's terminology. Thus his emphasis on the renwang (benevolent king) is strongly

reminiscent of Mozi's discourse on the jianjun (universally minded ruler). Confucius did not focus on the ruler, counting the formation of ministers of state more pressing. Mencius differs from Confucius here partly insofar as the political context is more profoundly troubled, partly insofar as Mozi's thinking is now part of that context and requires refutation.

> Mencius said,"The people in power are not worth our censure; their government is not worth condemnation. The great man alone can rectify the evils in the prince's heart. When the prince is benevolent, everyone else is benevolent; when the prince is dutiful, everyone else is dutiful; when the prince is correct, everyone else is correct. Simply by rectifying the prince one can put the state on a firm basis." Mencius 4A 20; Lau 1983:126

> The sage, having taxed his eyes to their utmost capacity, went on to invent the compasses and the square, the level and the plumb-line, which can be used endlessly for the production of squares and circles, planes and straight lines [26], and, having taxed his ears to their utmost capacity, he went on to invent the six pipes which can be used endlessly for setting the pitch of the five notes, and, having taxed his heart to its utmost capacity, he went on to practise government that tolerated no suffering, thus putting the whole Empire under the shelter of his benevolence (ren)....Hence, only the benevolent man is fit to be in high position. Mencius 4A 1; Lau 1983:118.

While Confucius wished to renew the Zhou, Mencius specifically accepts the demise of the Zhou, brings forward a theory of dynastic cycles to account for that demise as a fated, almost inevitable process, and elevates the foundational principles of sage and renwang as sources of a newly instituted order. Confucius, we saw, refrained from making the sage an exemplary figure. Mencius specifically claims that Confucius himself was a sage - more, was the

originator of a new order [27] . Here he almost anticipates Dong Zhongshu's claim that Confucius had been appointed wang by heaven and had received the mandate. Mencius thus grounds a hierarchical benevolent society with the king at its apex; structurally, his only difference from Mozi here is the maintenance, and heightening, of clan privilege.

Mencius rejects the word li (benefit) in describing the activity of the ruler, yet his arguments against it involve a poor travesty of Mozi's position; at stake really is an aristocratic exercise in zhengming (rectification of names) directed towards removing the artisanal/commercial concept of profitable activity. Yet - with an important qualification - it is the idea of profitable engagement that is central to the concept renwang; the king should so organise economic and social relations, should so work towards a state of material prosperity, that all the people will benefit. The qualification is that in this social dispensation, Mencius preserves the privileges of an elite group. Thus, expropriating the voice of the dispossessed, he argues that the common people, once their basic needs are met, will rejoice in the lavish music festivals and hunts that are their lords' (but not their own) indulgence [28] . He argues one form of order (li) for the elite, and another (fa - fixed laws and penalties) for the masses [29]. Most particularly, he excludes from this concept of rulership the sort of frugality urged by Mozi: lavish music festivals and funerals are retained, even it seems in

the present context of extreme economic disorder; the elite should not forgo their privileges at any price, and Mencius himself was well-known for the size and opulence of his entourage (no sign here of the impoverished enquirers who received instruction from Confucius) [30]. In his critique of Mozi, Mencius misreads Mohist li as the selfish accumulation of profit, rather than as the generation of benefits for all.

(i) Ren and Human Nature

While Mencius' theory of the innate goodness of the human heart and of human nature was an important inspiration to later Confucians, receiving detailed elaboration in the work of Zhu Xi, it is in many ways extremely problematic. Several difficulties, for example, gather round his parable of the child in danger of falling in a well:

> Mencius said, "No man is devoid of a heart sensitive to the suffering of others. Such a senistive heart was possessed by the Former Kings and this manifested itself in compassionate government. With such a sensitive heart behind compassionate government, it was as easy to rule the Empire as rolling it on your palm.
> My reason for saying that no man is devoid of a heart sensitive to the suffering of others is this. Supose a man were, all of a sudden, to see a young child on the verge of falling into a well. He would certainly be moved to compassion, not because he wanted to get in the good graces of the parents, nor because he wished to win the praise of his fellow villagers or friends, nor yet because he disliked the cry of the child. From this it can be seen that whoever is devoid of the heart of compassion is not human, whoever is devoid of the heart of shame is not human, whoever is devoid of the heart of courtesy and modesty is not human, and whoever is devoid of the heart of right and wrong is not human. The heart of compassion is the seed of benevolence; the heart of shame, of

> dutifulness; the heart of courtesy and modesty, of observance of the rites; the heart of right and wrong, of wisdom. Man has these four seeds just as he has four limbs. Mencius 2A 6; Lau 1983:82-3.

Taken on its own, the story has a strong intuitive plausibility. The problem is that it defeats other aspects of Mencius' philosophy, for it shows, if anything, not the Mencian particularity of ren but the Mohist universality of jian'ai: in a limit-situation (the kind of discurisve device introduced by Mozi) one instinctively moves to save a child in distress, whatever one's relationship to it might be. Mencius could have complicated the story in his own favour by introducing a second child, describing a scenario where one must choose between saving a stranger and saving one's own. Here, again with intuitive plausibility, he could have argued that the immediate impulse is to save one's own, thus grounding the particularity of ren. However, he lets his narrative stand.

The response that Mencius is not at this stage talking about ren (he's not) but about commiseration, ce-yin, the original seed from which ren grows, resolves nothing. Indeed, it further complicates our reading, for it suggests that there is an original universality to the heart which becomes fully-formed in the particularity of ren; why the process of formation should be thus, and what guides it, is not indicated (it is suggested that the responsibility for self-cultivation lies with the individual - but again, why he should cultivate in himself the preferential love of the

family is not argued.)

A different response might remark that Mencius starts his story by talking about the virtue of kings: the compassionate heart is the seed from which the kingly virtue of ren grows (the king's ren being universal insofar as it is directed to all in his domain). Here, however, the problem of particularity is not resolved, but submerged. For the path to kingly ren in the Mencian scheme lies by way of the family, and involves a widening of ren beyond its first familial context towards universality. Furthermore, there is in Mencius anyway a tension between universal kingly ren and particular familial ren: if the king's ren is universal, without being destructive of the familial context, why can the indivdual not cultivate universality (ren as jian'ai) and preserve his family at the same time, as Mozi argued?

Another point concerns the fact that it is an adult who is moved by compassion to save the child. But if the dynamic here comes from compassion, what is the interplay between the seed of compassion and the fruit of benevolence in an adult life? Our first response to the imagery of seeds and growth might be to locate seeds (an original tendency) in childhood and growth (a fulfilled capacity) in adulthood: it might thus be to consider ren the ideal motivating force, the force of rationally structured motivation, that takes over from and completes the raw tendency of ce. Yet an implication in the story might be that, at any stage in life, the original seeds of the heart

might express themselves directly, as some immediate impulse that evades the layers of moral formation. And unless one has doubts about the value of that impulse (claiming for instance that it is ambivalent rather than wholly good), then it is not clear why the impulse alone should not be affirmed, rather than the impulse and the completed virtue. Could Mencius not have said that ren itself is the original seed and impulse of the heart, which in time comes to fruition as perfected virtue (it is this move that Zhu Xi makes, for instance)?

A further complication - and it is this that shows the essence of the Mencian procedure - concerns the derivation of all four seeds of the heart, and their completed forms as virtue, from this single story. We can acknowledge that the story demonstrates compassion. But shame? Surely it is precisely the absence of shame that Mencius shows, and on his own admission: the man acts "not because he wanted to get in the good graces of the parents, nor because he wished to win the praise of his fellow villagers or friends." Similarly, it is difficult to see that the story has anything to do with the seed of courtesy and modesty, other than by excluding it as a motivating factor from the scenario. And while the seed of right and wrong (shi-fei) - as an innate capacity for deliberation and judgement - is partially affirmed in the judgement behind the action described, that judgement is itself subsumed under the immediacy of the impulse of compassion.

Apparent in this story, as in any theory of innate natural goodness, is the strategy of incorporating one's deepest presuppositions into the narrative, whilst so structuring it that they are then seemingly derived as conclusions in a self-evident way. [Laozi's appeal to a nature beyond culture is a move of a similar sort.] Mencius' project is to ground Confucian morality in a more fundamental way than hitherto, hence the introduction of the nature (xing) and the heart (xin); and his ascription of foundational value to the heart - influenced both by Mozi's theory of love and by Laozi's naturalness - is such that, either everyone is considered in essence a Confucian, or everyone has a set of innate capacities which find their natural fulfilment in Confucianism. Confucian thinking is thus the essence of that one normative culture which had its historical foundations in the Xia dynasty. If Mencius' arguments seem self evident to any amongst his contemporaries, it is because they have over generations been nurtured on ideas similar to the ones for which he argues.

(ii) Ren and Self-cultivation

We have already noted the lack of interest in psychology in the Analects. Despite the centrality of the heart in Mencius, it would be wrong to see his comments on it as constituting a psychological doctrine. Certainly he seems to have practised powerful forms of self-cultivation, perhaps involving meditation and breathing control:

> "May I ask what your strong poinst are?"
> "I have an insight into words. I am good at cultivating my flood-like qi (huoranzhi qi)."
> "May I ask what this flood-like qi is?"
> "It is difficult to explain. This is a qi which is, in the highest degree, vast and unyielding [31]. Nourish it with integrity and place no obstacle in its path and it will fill the space between Heaven and Earth. It is a qi which unites rightness and teaching (dao). Deprive it of these and it will collapse. It is born of accumulated rightness and cannot be appropriated by anyone through a sporadic show of rightness. Whenever one acts in a way that falls below the standard set in one's heart, it will collapse. Hence I said Gaozi never understood rightness because he looked upon it as external. You must work at it and never let it out of your mind." Mencius 2A 2; Lau 1983:78.

His reference to the heart, however, is not discursive in the sense that he elaborates an introspective or faculty psychology. He roots the virtues in the heart, rather than in pedagogy, tradition, or Heaven; he finds the heart's inclinations confirmed by tradition; he produces a direct narrative which appeals to the culturally-determined intuitions of his audience; and that is where he stays. The style of his rhetoric is pragmatically geared to establishing confidence in the Confucian option, and evolving a sense of kingly virtue, not to a speculative reading of human nature or the human psyche.

(iii) Kingly Virtue: Ideals, Decline, and the Mind of the People.

Together with the theory of the heart and nature, the Mencian theory of kingship remained a profound legacy for later Confucians. We have already stressed its main features; the primacy of the benevolent king, or renwang, and benevolent government, renzheng; economics as a central feature of government; the idea of dynastic cycles; the

acceptance of the end of the Zhou lineage, and the need for a new king whose virtue would be the sole criterion for office; the suggestion that Confucius himself was the model of the sagely ruler; and the restitution of clan order.

Influential as it became, the theory of dynastic cycles is the weakest point in Mencius' presentation. Starting with the assumption of a golden age of perfect virtue, he fails to incorporate any dynamic that would initiate the recurring process of decline which eventually necessitates the emergence of a new virtuous ruler. Whilst chaos is diverted from the heart to the economic sphere, the emergence of economic chaos itself is left without account.

In parallel with the foundational role of the heart, Mencius suggests the foundational role of the people: and just as the heart generates the virtues, so the people "generate" the king [32]. There is here a profound tension between the elitism Mencius wishes to preserve, and the role he ascribes to the people. The king exists for the people, not the people for the king. To rule, the king must know the mind of the people. The king forfeits his right to rule - indeed, forfeits the name "king" - if he abandons benevolence. The one who is appointed (by whom is unclear - presumably Tian) has a right to kill the unjust ruler. The murmurings of the people are one sign of political disorder [33]. With these themes Mencius circumscribes a vision of ren as royal service.

Yet the vision is not democratic in any strict sense, though presumably popular demonstrations of approval indicate that a particular individual carries the virtue of leadership. In a sense the mind of the people becomes equated here with Tianming: the people's approval of a ruler is the mark of heaven's approval. The dynamic of choice and election, however, is not manifest; and while "the people" obviously played an important part in Mencius' rhetoric, with their well-being or lack of it forming a critical point of appeal to individual rulers (the very possibility of this appeal is rooted in an assumed network of beliefs about Tianming), nonetheless - and particularly insofar as it seems Mencius does not favour the authority of popular revolution - the practical authority for appointment of a new king still lies with a specific elite. In all of this, "the people" have for Mencius a status of extreme malleability: not possessed directly of their own voice (reports on their "murmurings" are mediated), they can work to support his argument in any way he chooses; thus he can have them go cheerfully to their death:

> Mencius said,"The people under a leader of the feudal lords are happy; those under a true King are expansive and content. They bear no ill-will when put to death, neither do they feel any gratitude when profited. They move daily towards goodness without realizing who it is that brings this about." Mencius 7A 13; Lau 1983:184.

4. ZHUANGZI'S CRITIQUE OF MENCIUS

In a style of argument that remains permanently without refutation at a theoretical level, Zhuangzi sets out to demolish the foundational positions established by Mencius.

At once he sets in the air any other foundations that would subsequently be grounded. Reversing the normative preferences of Confucian evaluation, exposing the partial and hierarchical orderings that Mencius enshrines as natural, demonstrating the inevitable paradoxes that attend any normative moral philosophy (and so subverting any reading of his own text that might find in it a naturalist philosophy of "the Way"), his thinking soars into a relativistic universe where no boundaries are permanent or unchanging, whilst his judgement allows the practical necessity and inevitability of pragmatic positions as a necessary component to getting on in the world.

(i) The Rejection of the Mencian heart.

In order to grasp the force of Zhuangzi's dialectic, it is well to consider various reversals of received wisdom that he offers before checking his reading of the Mencian heart.

Zhuangzi (-369 to -286) occupied the same world of competing philosophies as Mencius; his stance was to judge that competition intrinsic to the flux of life, allowing no clear vantage point from which the merits of the various positions might be impartially judged. Any position - any teaching or dao - is itself part of the debate, drawing on its own criteria of evaluation (shi-fei) in order to support its stance, and thus itself liable to subversion by the categories of a contrary discourse.[34] This round of changing discourses - not change possessed of any

direction, or inscribed within a teleological or dialectical process, but simply randomness and necessity, sprung from a play of forces: argument, power, patronage, fear - is as natural as the passage of the wind, bearing voices as varied as the softest breeze and the strongest gale: the winds thus are the pipes of earth, and teachings the pipes of heaven:

> "You hear the pipes of men, don't you, but not yet the pipes of earth, the pipes of earth but not yet the pipes of Heaven?"
> "I venture to ask the secret of it."
> "That hugest of clumps of soil blows out breath, by name the 'wind'. Better if it were never to start up, for whenever it does ten thousand hollow places burst out howling, and don't tell me you have never heard how the hubbub swells! The recesses in mountain forests, the hollows that pit great trees a hundred spans round,are like nostrils, like mouths, like ears, like sockets, like bowls, like mortars, like pools, like puddles. Hooting, hissing, sniffing, sucking, mumbling, moaning, whistling, wailing, the winds ahead sing out AAAH!, the winds behind answer EEEH!, breezes strike up a tiny chorus, the whirlwind a mighty chorus. When the gale has passed, all the hollows empty, and don't tell me you have never seen how the quivering slows and settles!" Zhuangzi 2; Graham,1986: 48-9.[35]

If the Confucian teaching is one amongst others - ascribing virtue to a certain type of person - why should an opposite type not be seen as equally, though differently, possessed of virtue? On this premise, Zhuangzi erects a rogues' gallery of figures who would haunt Confucians by their contradiction of the hierarchies of li: menials, criminals, cripples speak with a wisdom unknown to Mencius. Thus Cook Ding is seen to possess a skill equal to, but different from, the skill of the expert in li - or is seen to possess his own li of a sort excluded

from the Confucian canon: he carves the ox with a timing as apt as anyone presenting offerings at the royal ancestral feast:

> Cook Ding was carving an ox for Lord Wenhui. As his hand slapped, shoulder lunged, foot stamped, knee crooked, with a hiss! with a thud! the brandished blade as it sliced never mised the rhythm, now in time with the Mulberry Forest dance, now with an orchestra playing the Jingshou.
> "Oh, excellent!" said Lord Wenhui. "That skill should such heights!"
> "What your servant cares about is dao, I have left skill behind me. When I first began to carve oxen, I saw nothing but oxen wherever I looked. Three years more and I never saw an ox as a whole. Nowadays, I am in touch through the daemonic in me, and do not look with the eye. With the senses I know where to stop, the daemonic I desire to run its course. I rely on Heaven's structuring, cleave alone the main seams, let myself be guided by the main cavities, go by what is inherently so. A ligament or tendon I never touch, not to mention solid bone A good cook changes his chopper once a year because he hacks. A common cook changes it once a month, because he smashes. Now I have had this chopper for nineteen years, and have taken apart several thousand oxen, but the edge is as though it were fresh from the grindstone. At that joint there is an interval, and the chopper's edge has no thickness; if you insert what has no thickness where there is an interval, then, what more could you ask, of course there is ample room to move the edge about. That's why after nineteen years the edge of my chopper is as though it were fresh from the grindstone.
> "However, whenever I come to something intricate, I see where it will be hard to handle and cautiously prepare myself, my gaze settles on it, action slows down for it, you scarcely see the flick of the chopper - and at one stroke the tangle has been unravelled, as a clod crumbles to the ground. I stand chopper in hand, look proudly round at everyone, dawdle to enjoy the triumph until I'm quite satisfied, then clean the chopper and put it away."
> "Excellent!" said Lord Wenhui. "Listening to the words of Cook Ding, I have learned from them how to nurture life."
>
> Zhuangzi 3; Graham 1986:63-4

For Zhuangzi nature and its patterns stand against culture, death against life, as something to be revelled

in, rather than controlled and feared: the whole universe is seen by him as an unending process of transformation, and the inscription of some uniquely normative cultural value within that process is a perverse inscription of death within life, which lends to the moment of death itself an absolute terror. The Confucian ritualising of death is an avoidance of the factuality of death through a (suppressed) affirmation of immortality in the continuing life of the ancestors and of the community. Zhuangzi undoes the fear of death in order to liberate nature from culture, valorising a visionary excess that flies beyond the confines of the law:

> When Zhuangzi was dying, his disciples wanted to give him a lavish funeral. Said Zhuangzi
> "I have heaven and earth for my outer and inner coffin, the sun and moon for my pair of jade discs, the stars for my pearls, the myriad creatures for my farewell presents. Is anything missing in my funeral paraphernalia? What will you add to these?"
> "Master, we are afraid that the crows and kites will eat you."
> "Above ground, I'll be eaten by the crows and kites; below ground,I'll be eaten by the ants and molecrickets. You rob the one of them to give to the other; how come you like them so much better?"
> Zhuangzi 32; Graham 1986:125.

In various ways Zhuangzi shows the lack in Confucian sagacity, makes Confucius draw another wisdom from different teachers. On the status of the heart, Zhuangzi himself steps forward as the teacher of Mencius. Why, of the various organs of the body, should the heart be granted special status? - the organs perform their diverse functions, and the heart has its own particular function amongst these, but no more. Here he reduces the process of deliberation and judgment linked with the heart:

"Petty fears intimidate
The supreme fear calms.
It shoots like the trigger releasing the string on the notch",
referring to its manipulation of 'That's it, that's not' (shi-fei).
"It ties us down as though by oath, by treaty",
referring to its commitment to the winning alternative.
"Its decline is like autumn and winter",
speaking of its daily deterioration. As it sinks, that which is the source of its deeds cannot be made to renew them.
"It clogs as though it were being sealed up",
speaking of its drying up in old age. As the heart nears death, nothing can make it revert to the Yang.
Zhuangzi 2; Graham 1986:50.

Mencius derives social order jointly from the innate seeds of the individual heart and the superiority of the heart to other organs. He develops no argument tying the nature of persons to the nature of society: he presumes a certain social order to be natural, and its naturalness an expression of the nature of the person. Zhuangzi sees the heart as one organ amongst others - as such, susceptible to death - and adds that, since individuals form their very different ideas about life through the heart's instrumentality, the heart itself constitutes no criterion for distinguishing between positions: the completed heart of the sage and the fool are each perfect in their own way.

No obvious social philosophy can be derived from Zhuangzi's reading. One thing it is not, I would suggest, is a separation of claims about the body (or person) from claims about society. His is an individualist anarchism that does not even portray the minimal social utopia we found with Laozi. He praises those who are recluses and

outcasts, those who cultivate their own qi and live in harmony with nature; and he rejects rulership and any concern with politics as mere trivia in comparison. His ideal is the daemonic man (shenren), who develops himself without fear of death, who stands free of any social conventions, who possesses penetrating insight and complete mastery of his own emotions and behaviour [36]. Yet this mastery does point to a paradox in Zhuagzi's rejection of the heart. Cultivation of self as a complete organism is certainly an appropriate stance within his style of thinking; but as part of this he does also seem to recognise some guiding principle within the organon, just as he suggests there might be some initiating and organising force behind the cosmos as a whole [37]. This principle receives no specific elaboration (it is not explicated as a foundational, metaphysical principle), but remains subsumed within his text as the merest possibility of a metaphysic, and as the merest possibility of sagely rulership.

(ii) The Affirmation of Naturalness.

The critical stance of Zhuangzi, as of Laozi, is a negative dialectic; this, minimally, is his reading of the heart: a rejection of the metaphor of hierarchy, without any necessary contrasting commitment to foundational metaphors of democracy and naturalness. Yet, given that he does use an extended imagery of naturalness, how does he want this to be read [38]? Is he putting forward a particular philosophy as better than any others; or is he

reducing all philosophies to a natural play of competition which allows no judgement on their substantive merits?

The story of Cook Ding suggests that all acquired skills are governed by rules, or li, that in this they are equal, and that no evaluation of one skill against another is possible. But the torturer who knows how to prolong the intensity of pain over time in order to extract a confession is possessed of a skill, as is the man who controls the gas chamber. Are these skills equal to others, and beyond any general principles of moral assessment? If so, is Zhuangzi's reduction simply an opening for the naked excercise of power? I think not: for whilst he might admit the existence of power, what he undercuts is firstly the masked validation of power as virtue and righteousness within a normative discourse, and secondly the direct appeal to power as self-establishing: just as the capacity of the heart does not grant it any claims to superiority, so the existence of power does not require that it be accorded any particular respect. By reducing all claims to authority, in an essentially libertarian discourse, Zhuangzi robs those who would employ torture of any possible ground of appeal [39].

What Zhuangzi does not do - and it is here that he has been most consistently misread - is provide a naturalist foundation from which something like torture might be judged immoral. Here, first by the logic of his discourse, he removes all possibility of such a foundation; - his

making things equal undercuts all priorities and foundationalism; secondly, the usage of his text does not require that dao be read as a foundational principle; and thirdly, since nature has already been stripped of moral attributes by Laozi (a move I take Zhuangzi to support) then even if it gets reintroduced as a metaphysical principle, it can just as easily be made to support the validity of torture as anything else. Zhuangzi's idea of naturalness is not of natural virtue different from, and superior to, the virtue of the Confucians. His naturalness is one way of being amongst others, which wins support and favour if at all by the force of rhetorical presentation [40].

What are we to make of the naturalism which still does at times seem to assert itself? In comparing teachings with the winds of the earth, Zhuangzi describes the crescendo as all winds blow together, then the silence once the stormh as passed: it is the silence he seems to favour, the absence of all teachings, rather than the struggle of competing daos. This silence, this absence of distinguishing marks and features, is graphic in the tale of original chaos:

> The Emperor of the South Sea was Fast, the Emperor of the North Sea was Furious, the Emperor of the Centre was Huntun. Fast and furious met from time to time in the land of Huntun who treated them very generously. Fast and Furious were discussing how to repay Huntun's bounty.
> "All men have seven holes through which they look, listen, eat, breathe; he alone doesn't have any. Let's try boring them."
> Every day they bored one hole, and on the seventh day

Huntun died.
Zhuangzi 7; Graham 1986:98.

The point at stake here and elsewhere does seem to be Laozi's point that teachings and culture are better abandoned, that priority is ascribed to the formlessness of the uncarved block.

(iii) The Rejection of ren.

Zhuangzi's rejection of ren is a rejection of culture and politics insofar as these function as adornments, encourage a fear of death, expose one to a premature death, and generally detract from the focus of self-cultivation that a frugal and socially withdrawn lifestyle support. Ren is thus seen as a style of self-destruction rather than self-enhancement [41]. In arguing for the forms of virtue that he finds more attractive, Zhuangzi focusses on the individual to the exclusion of the social, thus differing from Laozi. His virtues are self-directed rather than other-directed - he does not for instance mention Laozi's virtue ce, compassion - and the focus, in a warring age of unexpectedly sudden and premature death, is on cultivation of qi and abandonment of the political arena.

In writing on narcissism, Freud distinguishes two forms, that of the man and of the woman [42] . The man, forced through the style of his socialisation to abandon his original narcissism, preserves it subliminally only in the outward projection of object-relations, in the pursuit of the ego - ideal as ideal self achieved through work and status, and in the attraction to the love-object as the

manifest form of the original self; love for the other, then, particularly as falling-in-love, is in the first instance narcissistic self-love masked as nostalgic return.

The narcissism of the woman, by contrast, is such as to remain self-contained, intact, not ruptured in such a way as to open an endless quest for its lost original form, but self-absorbed - a fascinating other that does not want to give of itself, that lives within a measured complacency. Even if taken as a particular type of femininity, the characterisation is intriguing; more intriguing here is its aptness as a characteristic of Zhuangzi's concept of self.

If Freud valorises female narcissism as the fascinating other, does that fascination remain if the same narcissism is manifest in male form? The question does not simply apply to Zhuangzi, for in the west the virtues of complacency and self-absorbed non-action are central to Stoicism, and have been extensively thematised,there and in earlier and later thinking, around the contrasts of immanence-transcendence, and contemplation-action, where transcendence/action focusses on the original male other-directed narcissism, the outwardly-moving quest for the lost self. If Zhuangzi's self is the feminine for Freud, (a feminine of which Freud stood in awe), it is a feminine already appropriated as a masculine ideal - such, with Zhuangzi, because he, as Laozi, allows no space for women in the articulation and attainment of virtue, despite the residuum in his text of an imagery of women.

It is the outward, other-directedness of ren as Confucian virtue that Zhuangzi criticises - an outwardness that marks a loss and forgetfulness of the self. In one example, pointing to the diverse behaviour and responses to the world evinced by different animals in different contexts, he makes the Nietzschean point that there are as many different stances in the world as there are forms of life, each incommensurable with the others.

5. XUNZI'S PRAGMATIC CONFUCIANISM

Xunzi's stance is essentially forged by Zhuangzi's criticisms, by the need provoked by Zhuangzi to rethink Confucianism along non-foundationalist lines. If Zhuangzi encapsulates the sense that all life-forms, in their differences, are of equal value (or equally without value), Xunzi responds that customs and methods (li and fa) have long been developed to enrich and complexify, in an important way, the life-options available to individuals and communities, that the option for reclusive cultivation of one's own qi is of minority interest, and that the Confucian stance is one which, tried and tested over generations, emerges as the best prescription for social order. Acknowledging that one can no longer use the foundationalist imagery of tian and xin, Xunzi gives primacy to li as the network of practices shown historically to organise life successfully to the maximum advantage of all [43]. [This utilitarian formula, nowhere theorised as such but presented as a central notion by

Xunzi, is reckoned to have profoundly different consequences from Mohist utility (li): while Mozi urges a minimalization of "adornments" in his doctrine of frugality, Xunzi urges the maximal fulfilment of desires in the opportunities afforded by culture, though limiting that fulfilment to an elite group whose membership is determined solely by skill and achievement,not by inheritance.]

Within the framework of li, ren is given little overt articulation, though it is assumed nonetheless as a central virtue, in conjunction with yi (righteousness). Its relative displacement through li is comparable to the displacement of li through ren that we saw with Mencius. Xunzi predicates the priority of li not only on the testimony of the sage-kings and history, but also on the requirements of human nature; here he is usually taken to present human nature as evil, in contrast with Mencius' reading of nature as good: li is thus validated as the necessary constraint and formation required by a nature that would otherwise run to excess. (His position here raised a problem for later Confucians that was not resolved until Zhu Xi's metaphysical reformulation of xing as essentially good). For Mencius and Xunzi the structural dynamic of the heart/nature is the same: seeds that, without interference, grow to virtue; desires that, without interference, precipitate conflict or chaos. Xunzi envisages a Hobbesian state of nature that requires li and kingly rule if conflict is to be overcome and individuals

enabled to pursue their several ends [44].

While Xunzi seems unequivocal here and elsewhere on the question of original evil, there are other passages which let human nature be read as originally neutral, if not positively good. A point of critical importance here is that, in thinking about human nature - and in thinking about psychology - Xunzi is extending the scope of philosophical conceptuality beyond the range hitherto achieved. His treatment of Confucian rationality, for instance, incorporates an attention to argumentation learned from later Mohist disputation, together with an original account of psychological functions that really marks the beginnings of philosophical psychology in China. His view of human nature specifically fields a claim not evident in Mencius or Zhuangzi: human nature as such is universally constant; cultural practises create its various manifestions; and through appropriate practice any man can become a sage.

CHAPTER 5

FROM HAN CONFUCIANISM TO CHAN BUDDHISM

Of the various meetings between cultures known in world history, that between India and China, realised in the medium of Buddhism, is amongst the most significant, involving profound differences in language, worldview and philosophical method. Buddhism displaced Daoist and Confucian thinking for seven hundred years and, in some readings, confirmed its hegemony in a sublimated form within the neo-Confucianism advanced by Zhu Xi and his peers. Yet Zhu sought to place Buddhism outside the sphere of a newly positive Confucian vision. Furthermore, in this vision it was not Buddhism alone that corrupted and betrayed the spirit of Confucius, but the whole of China's unified imperial heritage; the 700 years of Buddhist vitality had indeed seen the loss of the Confucian Way, but - the claim went - that Way had been lost earlier, 1500 years before Zhu Xi, and its last articulate spokesman (indeed, one of its few significant spokesmen apart from Confucius) had been Mencius. Zhu saw himself in a sagely, prophetic role, resuming the true Confucian discourse at the point where Mencius left it.

While Zhu pictured himself thus, it is clear that despite the rhetoric of immediacy, and of the transparency

of the transmitted text - suggesting his work as hermeneut to be the pure, undisrupted re-presentation of an original truth - Zhu's writing bears the density of historical residue, as his vision receives the impress of a series of images shifting through a telescopic chain of differently resolved lenses. To control this shifting series and order it around the notion of a single transmission of truth, daotong, is the strategic move Zhu makes in order to secure the authenticity of his commentary on the classics [1]. Yet formally this move is one already made for him in Buddhism - in Chan the theory of transmission of mind outside the teaching, premissed on an ideal Indian Buddhist patriarchate responsible for preserving the essence of wisdom, establishes the notion of a verbal transmission of truth, in an ideal relationship between master and disciple [2]. Zhu transforms this into an ideal textual transmission, suggesting further that there is an original mind present in the scriptural sources that speaks directly to the mind of the sage, making the written medium a transparent form transcending history.

Furthermore, Zhu's status as sage, offering his wisdom in verbal exchange, echoes that of the Chan masters, just as it echoes the verbal teaching style of Confucius and Mencius: indeed, the crystallisation of speech in written records, yulei (Classified Conversations), developed as a device to preserve the force of oral instruction within Chan, is used in turn by neo-Confucians to preserve the

teachings of their sages.

Any attempt to grasp the shifting trajectories of history between Xunzi and Zhu Xi can only be partial, but some reading of them - some reading of the ways in which the contextualisation of ren came to be written and re-written - is required if the force of Zhu's thinking is to come to the fore.

(i) HAN CONONFUCIANISM; DONG ZHONGSHU.

We remarked earlier that Dong Zhongshu (-179? to -104?) can be seen as the first systematiser in Confucian thinking; yet the point requires some modification. Everything presupposes system: the making of individual speech-acts (parole) presupposes the differential system of language (langue) as the permissive matrix for speech as such; any act presupposes a cultural framework from which, even as rejection, it draws shape or meaning; any original expression of ren, with Confucius, presupposes the network of li; any intuitive Daoist naturalism (perhaps) presupposes a system in nature. Of significance in philosophy is the movement of reflexivity which attempts to bring a presupposed and inherited system to rational articulation. At the same time this process of ordering and grading is one of repression and displacement. Based as it is on a set of "foundational" taboos, any society is committed to presuming certain conventions to be natural in such a way that an acceptable account of them will be a

rationalisation which, in missing their darker, arbitrary aspect, leaves the foundations of culture secure; this move, as we have seen, can be particularly evident in philosophy, and marks the kind of rationalised system that Dong Zhongshu produced [3].

In providing a framework of belief for Han Confucians, and an organisation of knowledge which expressed itself in the curriculum of the imperial university,Dong drew on a set of cosmological notions formerly distinct from the ethical reflections of Confucius, Mencius and Xunzi [4]. These served to legitimate Confucianism as a prophetic religious system, as a principle of bureaucratic organsation, and as a theorisation of the, ritual more than moral, functions of imperium. Here Confucius became confirmed as the hidden King of the Zhou, and raised to cultic status as an object of state veneration. Within Dong's quasi-magic world the parallelism of macrocosm and microcosm, of nature and society, was worked out in profound detail. The slightest unexpected occurrence in nature could carry grave implications for the organisation of the state; the imperial task of monitoring cosmic order through ritual was a continuation of that compulsively charged repetition we remarked earlier within Shang and Zhou religious practice. One reported story for the Han period gives something of the flavour:

> Once when (the statesman) Ping was travelling, he encountered a crowd of brawlers, some of whom had wounded or killed one another. To the surprise of his entourage he passed them by without stopping. Soon afterward, however, he met a man leading an ox which

> was panting with protruding tongue. At once he stopped his horse and inquired of the man how many miles he had been traveling. On being criticized by some of his followers for this seeming triviality, he told them that the brawlers could be left to those officials whose particular business it was to deal with such matters; the harmonizing of the yin and yang, however, was a matter of concern to the highest officials. "The Three Highest Ministers act to harmonize the yin and yang. Just now it is spring, when the lesser yang is operative in affairs, so that there should not yet be any great heat. Nevertheless, the ox is panting because of a summer-like heat, which, I fear, means that the seasons are out of joint." From The History of the Former Han dynasty, Quoted Fung 1953:10.[5]

In the syncretism of Dong's writing the Mohist personalist reading of tian becomes appropriated as the foundation for Confucian religiosity. Heaven's will is positively directed towards human well-being, and Heaven, for the first time in Confucian thinking it would seem, is precisely identified as ren:

> The beautiful expression of love (ren) lies in Heaven, for Heaven is love. Heaven protects and shelters all creatures, generates and produces them, nourishes and forms them. Its work is without end; when it reaches a conclusion, it returns again to its beginning. And everything that it produces it hands over to man for his service. If we examine the purpose of Heaven, (we see that) it is boundless and infinitely loving. Man, receiving his life from Heaven, (likewise) receives from it love and is thereby himself loving...The purpose of Heaven is ever to love or confer benefit; its work is ever to nourish and create growth. Chunqiu fanlu 44; Fung 1953:52-3.

Heaven functions in Dong in a dual sense, sometimes referring to the universe as an integral ordered whole, sometimes referring to one pole of a duality between Heaven and Earth. In either case, however, Heaven is not a transcendent originating principle, as with a god creating ex nihilo; rather it names the immanent principle of

growth, energy and creativity within the cosmos. There is no radical separation between Heaven and Earth as there is between God and the world in Judaeo-Christian thinking. [That much said, Dong does speak of an Origin (yuan) from which things arise, and the Origin is prior to the distinction of Heaven and Earth. It is the task of the sage to relate all things to the Origin. Even if yuan is a designation of Tian in its broader sense, however, the movement of origination is not one of creation as an act of divine will, a creation of being from non-being, but rather, apparently, one of emanation, with the basic principles of being originally present within the source. Yet the nature of that presence is far from clear: the acknowledged sequence of origination is yin and yang, the five elements or agents (wuxing), Heaven and Earth, and man, but a certan metaphysical priority is given to yin and yang and wuxing insofar as these are the interactive elements from which all beings are produced, just as a teleological priority is given to man as the goal of completion towards which the process of the universe tends:

> Of the creatures born from the refined essence of Heaven and Earth, none is more noble than man. Man receives the mandate from Heaven and is therefore superior to other creatures. Other creatures suffer troubles and defects and cannot practice humanity (ren) and righteousness (yi); man alone can practice them. Chunqiu fanlu ch.56; Chan 1973:280.

In their metaphysical aspect yin and yang and wuxing approximate to Plato's Forms insofar as they characterise the transcendence of origins as positively substantial rather than empty, (while Dong incorporates aspects of

Daoist thought, he does not accept the Daodejing's reading of the origin as wu, emptiness or non-being); they also approximate to the Forms insofar as they come to be materially substantiated in the natural and human universes, giving to things their specific identities; they differ, though, insofar as they are not principles of identity as such, not universals, but rather specifications of the basic qualities and energies from which entities emerge; and they differ also insofar as they incorporate a dynamic element within transcendence, representing principles of movement and change rather than formal abstractions [6].

The question of emanation, or creation through divine will, is further focussed by Dong's ascription of attributes to tian. Tian is loving and creative, and is also possessed of intelligence. In presenting his anthropology, Dong notes:

> The mind possesses the power of thinking, which corresponds to (Heaven's) power of deliberation and calculation.Chunqiu fanlu 54; Fung 1953:31

Again, it is not clear in which of its two senses Tian is spoken of here, and therefore where the quality of intelligence is metaphysically grounded. Within the statement's context the distinction between Heaven and Earth is invoked, and it thus seems that the Heaven which emerges from the source is the locus of intelligence. If so, we have a formal parallel with the thinking of Plotinus: as for Plotinus mind (nous) as being, and as the

locus of the Forms, emerges from the One as non-being, so for Dong Heaven as intelligence emerges from yuan. [A difference in the comparison would be that, for Plotinus, the One is beyond characterisation, with metaphysical attributes only predicated of nous, while for Dong the existence of basic metaphysical principles is ontologically prior to the existence of (secondary) Tian].

(i) Dong's Anthropology: the Divided Self and the Secondariness of Woman.

The naming of Heaven, the attribution of qualities to it, is for Dong powerfully geared to identifying the scope and functioning of human life and political order: in tian this is linked to man (almost solely conceived male, as we shall see) by way of resemblance:

> Only man faces (Heaven) directly, with head erect and upright posture...In the physical form of man, for this reason, his head is large and round, like Heaven's countenance. His hair is like the stars and constellations. His ears and eyes, with their brilliance, are like the sun and moon. The penetrating understanding that lies within his breast is like the spiritual intelligence (of Heaven)...The symbols of Heaven and Earth, and correspondences between the yin and yang, are ever (found) established (also) in the (human) body.
> Chunqiu fanlu 54; Fung 1953:31 [7]

This macrocosmic mirroring and foundation of the human body and its attributes is not, however, without its problems. Dong characterises both man and Heaven as ren, yet, in one aspect of his theorisation of human nature, ren is not an innate but an acquired characteristic. Taking a middle road between Mencius and Xunzi, Dong sees xing as neither innately good nor evil, but rather as a resource with possibilities for both good and evil. Contrasting silk

as a spun and finished product with the silk fibers held in the cocoon, Dong claims the latter are not yet silk, but simply have the potential to become so: similarly the seeds of ethical disposition planted in xing are not as such good, but the potential for goodness:

> Someone says, "Since nature contains the beginning of goodness and since the mind possesses the basic substance of goodness, how can nature still not be regarded as good?"
> I reply, "You are wrong. The silk cocoon contains (potential) silk but it is not yet silk, and the egg contains the (potential) chicken but it is not yet a chicken. If we follow these analogies, what doubt can there be? Heaven has produced mankind in accordance with its great principle, and those who talk about nature should not differ from each other. But there are some who say that nature is good and others who say that nature is not good. Then what is meant by goodness differs with their various ideas. There is the beginning of goodness in human nature. Let us activate it and love our parents. And since man is better than animals, this may be called good - this is what Mencius meant by goodness." Chunqiu fanlu ch. 35; Chan 1973:277[8].

Dong does not pursue the metaphors he offers, but presumes them self-evident as an explication of his position. One difficulty is that, as he gives a dual meaning to tian, so also does he ascribe a dual meaning to xing: in its broader sense xing is inclusive of all potentialities, for good and evil, whilst in a narrower sense it is contrasted with qing, feelings or emotions - in that contrast, xing is good (characterised as productive of ren) and qing evil (productive of tan, covetousness). The contrast is further consolidated by linking xing with yang, the masculine principle, and qing with yin, the feminine principle, a move which, as we shall see, issues in a

necessary social subordination of women in Dong's eyes.

The Bohutong (Comprehensive Discussions in the White Tiger Hall) provides an extension of Dong's concept here, and in the contrast of xing and qing the translator chooses to render the former term not "nature", but "instincts."

> What do (the words) qing and xing mean? Xing (instinct) is the dispensation of the yang; qing emotion is the working of the yin. Man is born through the reception of the yin and yang fluids, therefore he harbours the Five Instincts and the Six Emotions. The Goumingjue (an Apocryphal Book of Filial Piety) says: "Emotion arises from the yin, it is desire (based) on momentary reflection; instinct arises from the yang, it is (always) attached to reason. The yang-qi (stands for) consideration for others, the yin-qi (stands for) selfishness...Therefore emotions have desire of gain (as their origin) instinct has consideration for others (as its base).
> What are the Five Instincts? They are 'consideration for others' ren, 'sense of the correct principles' yi, 'ceremonial behaviour 'li, 'wisdom' zhi, 'trustworthiness' xin. Tjan 1952:565

In one sense Tian is beyond good and evil, as yuan; in another, Tian is positive good, ren, and supreme intelligence. While yin and yang emerge from the source and constitute the material from which Heaven (in its secondary sense) and Earth are constituted, Heaven (again in its secondary sense) has the power to control the turbulence of yin and yang, and this controlling function is a model for the way in which man should organise his feelings:

> That which confines the multitude of evil things within, and prevents them appearing externally, is the mind. Therefore the mind is known as the confiner...Heaven has its restraints over the yin and yang, and the individual has his confiner of the feelings and desires; in this way he is at one with the course of Heaven. There the yin in its movements

> is not permitted to concern itself with spring and summer, and the moon when it is new is always obscured by the sun's light, sometimes completely and sometimes partially. Such is the way in which Heaven restrains the yin. Why, then, should one not diminish one's desires and check one's feelings, in order thus to respond to Heaven? Chunqiu fanlu 35; Fung 1953:35

Of particular interest here is the formal acknowledgement that Tian controls the yin and the yang, followed by an account where only the yin requires control: in fact, and precisely in its controlling function, Heaven here is appropriated to yang, and the principle of turbulence and disruption, at this metaphysical level, is simply yin [9].

The similarity between Heaven and man that Dong wishes to focus is, I think, one where both are engaged in a work of perfection: Tian, at a cosmic level, receives a heritage (of potentially disruptive yin) from the Origin yuan, and it maintains cosmic order by containing yin within appropriate bounds; man, in his nature and in his world, receives a heritage (of perhaps greater disruption) which he must order, working co-operatively with Tian. At the metaphysical level there seems here to be no easily held notion of an original goodness, nor is there an image of an original historical or transcendent utopia; there is, rather, a notion of perfection yet to be achieved: no longer is a golden age of the sages a principal locus of appeal, whilst the existence of evil and disorder at a cosmic level is acknowledged but not problematised - the work of overcoming it is the point, not a theory of its emergence, or at least, no more of a theory than is required to let the work get underway:

> Why does the Spring and Autumn Annals value the origin (yuan) highly and talk about it? The origin means the beginning. It means that the foundation must be correct. It expresses the kingly way. The king is the beginning of man. If the king is correct, then the original material force will be harmonious, wind and rain will be timely, lucky stars will appear, and the yellow dragon will descend. If the king is not correct, then strange transformations will take place in heaven above and bandits will appear...Chunqiu fanlu ch.6.
> It is only the Sage who can relate the myriad things to the One and tie it to the origin. If the source is not traced and the development from it followed, nothing can be accomplished....the first month of spring is a continuation of the activities of Heaven and earth, continuing the activities of Heaven and completing it. The principle is that (Heaven and man) accomplish together and maintain the undertaking. Ibid. ch. 13 Chan 1973:284-5.

The Bohutong carries an interesting elaboration on the cosmic linkage of Heaven and man. Identifying the Five Instincts, xing, as ren, yi, li, zhi and xin, and the Six Emotions as xi joy, nu anger, ai grief, lo happiness, ai love, and wu hate, it proceeds to link the instincts with the five elements, the five directions, and the five principle organs of the body (liver, heart, lung, kidneys and spleen). Ren is linked with the liver in the following way:

> Why (does) the liver (represent) consideration for others? The liver is the ssence of wood; consideration for others (expresses) love for the living. The east (represents) the yang, (there) the ten thousand things begin their lives. Therefore the liver resembles a tree, green-coloured, with branches and leaves. Why are the eyes its watch? The eyes can shed tears, but admit no objects. Likewise the tree shoots out branches and leaves, but nothing can enter it. Tjan 1952:566

The other-directedness of ren that is figured here in this physical and corporeal imagery is the primary point for

Dong Zhongshu. Contrasting ren and yi, he notes that ren is relational, directed outwards, whilst yi is directed towards the self as a principle of righteousness and self-control:

> The standard for love lies in showing affection, ai, to others, not to the self. That for righteousness lies in rectifying the self, not in rectifying others. Chunqiu fanlu 29;Fung 1953:38.

Whilst ren in principle remains the primary Confucian value, in practice the major ethical focus in Dong's thinking is the three bonds, sangong, the relations between ruler and subject, father and son, and husband and wife: in each of these, the first term is linked to yang and the second to yin, and the relationship is hierarchical. The principles of power, subordination and inferiority are thus metaphysically grounded, as is clear elsewhere when Dong speaks about yin: yang and yin are not equal complementary dualistic categories, but categories set in a hierarchical balance precariously held, where the principle of imbalance is yin.[10]

We noted in chapter one how philosophising about human nature has always implicitly been a philosophising about maleness, a point well evident in Dong and in the Bohutong. Yin is linked with qing, linked in turn with woman, fallenness, turbulence, disruption: the woman must be kept in place, and the organisation of social codes maintains her in the home:

> Why is it that according to the rites the man takes his wife, whereas the woman leaves her house? It is

> because the yin (to which a woman belongs) is lowly, and should not have the initiative; it proceeds to the yang in order to be completed. Therefore the zhuan says "The yang leads, the yin conforms; the man goes (ahead), the woman follows." BHT, 235; Tjan 1949:244.
>
> The reason that, (even) when the husband behaves badly, his wife has no right to leave him lies in the principle that Earth does not separate from Heaven. Though the husband (behaves) badly the wife is not allowed to leave him. BHT, 247; Tjan 1949:251.

Of particular significance, marking the way in which the feminine is overwritten with the codes of male relationships, we find that, at the heart of her relationship with her husband, the wife's role is explicated entirely in terms of the interplay of inter-male bonds:

> The wife serves her husband according to four principles. (Firstly), on the fist crowing of the cock she washes her hands and rinses her mouth. She combs her hair, draws over it a scarf of silk, fixes it with a pin, and fastens it, then she meets (her husband): this is the principle of (the relation of) Lord and subject. (Secondly), she feels affection (for him to such a degree that his loss results in) deep sorrow: that is the principle of (the relation of) father and son. (Thirdly), she keeps account of what there is and of what there is not and this is the principle of (the relation of) elder and younger brother. (Fourthly), within the doors (of the women's apartments) she sits with him on the mat: that is the principle of (the relation of) friends. BHT, 261b; Tjan 1949:260.

[I take friendship also to be understood as between males; as a form of relationship, and in significant contrast with the theorisations of friendship we find with Plato, Aristotle and Cicero, Dong lists his friendship as the last in his sequence of relationships [11].]

In this presentation the feminine is inscribed as maleness, the unknown is grasped as knowable in male

discourse, in two sense: the explication of the feminine occurs within the categories of male relationships and the essence of woman is thus shifted into a relation between men; and the status of woman is reduced to that of subordinate male within the male relationship. In terms of her complete containment within male discourse, and unlike the form of her presence within Daoism, woman here remains doubled, present to herself only through the lens of the male, so that even were it to be claimed that she should cultivate ren, that ren would be the secondariness and displacement of another's identity.

2. WANG CHONG: THE CIRCULARITY OF CRITIQUE.

> Once upon a time, in some out of the way corner of that universe which is dispersed into numberless twinkling solar systems, there was a star upon which clever beasts invented knowing. That was the most arrogant and mendacious minute of "world history", but nevertheless, it was only a minute. After nature had drawn a few breaths, the star cooled and congealed, and the clever beasts had to die. - One might invent such a fable, and yet he still would not have adequately illustrated how miserable, how shadowy and transient, how aimless and arbitrary the human intellect looks within nature...this intellect has no additional mission which would lead it beyond human life. Rather, it is human, and only its possessor and begetter takes it so solemnly - as though the world's axis turned within it. But if we could communicate with the gnat, we would learn that he likewise flies through the air with the same solemnity, that he feels the flying centre of the universe within himself.
> Nietzsche, On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense, Nietzsche, 1979: 79.

> Man holds a place within the universe like that of a flea or louse under a jacket or robe, or of a cricket or ant within a hole or crevice...
> Supposing insects had intelligence, they would scold man saying: "You eat the produce of heaven, and we eat it as well. You regard us as a plague, but are unaware that you yourself are a calamity to us."
> Wang Chong, Lunheng chs 43 and 49; Fung, 1953: 154-5.

Dong Zhongshu, and with him a large section of Han Confucianism, wished to articulate a sense of cosmic purpose behind the Confucian option - a purpose nonetheless freighted with anxiety insofar as the burden of maintaining cosmic order and individual integrity had to cope with a powerful residue of resistance and imbalance at the heart of all things, natural and human. Wang Chong, spokesman for a purposeless naturalism, questioned the point of Confucian aspiration, as also the ground of anxiety.

Differences between Dong and Wang Chong focus on the question of home. Wang insists there is no special sense in which the universe exists as a home for man - there is no cosmic scheme of things within which man has a privileged place, no correspondence between tian and man, no particular significance coded in the acts of nature, regular or irregular. The universe is as empty as Pascal's infinite spaces, as completely a self-subsistent phenomenon as the world of Lucretius. Man's existence is, rather, louselike, parasitic on reserves that were not created for him and that he does nothing to perfect: the reserve's existence is as spontaneous, unpredictable and unplanned as man's own. Wang's critique, more savage in its irony than Zhuangzi's (though also more moralistic), is appropriate to the denser body of assumption evident in Dong in comparison with Mencius.

Not that Wang separates himself completely from Dong's assumptions: he holds, for instance, to the significance of

the five virtues, ren included, as practical ways of organising life, and acknowledges with their functioning a provisional form of perfection; he notes the inevitability of an individual lot or destiny, ming, that cannot be circumvented; despite his own arguments to the contrary, he comes close to Dong's perception of human nature as essentially mixed; the constituents of his universe are equally yin and yang, wuxing, and Heaven and Earth.

Textuality is a form of parasitism, an inhabiting and feeding on what has gone before:

> Now in the Lunheng the current literature is taken up with the object of defining right and wrong and distinguishing between truth and falsehood. It is not an original production of something that did not exist previously. LH 87

Parasitic on the words of authority, on the identity of Confucius himself, Wang sculpts himself as a Confucian junzi in order to prove his credentials for critique:

> Wang Chong had a pure and sterling character...was of a cheerful and easy going disposition, and did not strive for wealth and honour...learned to behave with politeness, humility, benevolence, obedience, propriety, and reverence, - had the will of a great man. LH 66,67,65.

And so here the parsite has his day, his house is in the body of what already exists, from here he speaks:

> Jade is being confounded with stones. People cannot distinguish it...Right is being turned into wrong, and falsehood into truth. How is it possible not to speak of it? LH 89

Here and elsewhere Wang himself assumes the status of parasite in relation to previous traditions, in extension of his more generalised view of human life as parasitic in

essence. In one sense the claim parallels Zhuangzi's: we are caught, thrown, in the midst of a relativistic universe, there is no step beyond change to a position of changeless perfection, no step beyond conflict to a moment of original order, no step out of time to a timeless beyond: we latch onto what is at hand, and use it just as it in turn uses us.

> Man eats grain, and wears silk and hemp...Heaven does not produce grain, silk and hemp purposely, in order to feed and clothe mankind. LH 92

> Men in clothing live within the animals they devoured. And the same thing for plants. We eat rice, wheat, apples, the divine eggplant, the tender dandelion; but we also wear silk, linen, cotton; we live within the flora as much as we live within the fauna. We are parasites; thus we clothe ourselves. Thus we live within tents of skins like the gods within their tabernacles. Serres: 1982, 10.[12]

With Wang, in the process of parasitism, men become as gods through clothing themselves in the texts of tradition, in the words of Confucius and Laozi, in the garments of li, and this process is one where men assume for themselves the eyes and mind of Heaven and Earth, because

> we know that Heaven possesses neither mouth nor eyes...(that) the body of the Earth is formed of earth, and earth has neither mouth nor eyes. LH, 93

This position is itself finally an orientation to death that marks the inscription of death within life, knowing that death is merely a seam in the continuous fabric of living forms, or life but a passing design on the larger fabric of death. And here

> I have written the essays on Death and on the False reports about the Dead to show that the deceased have no consciousness...as soon as my readers have grasped this, they will restrain the extravagance of the

burials and become more economical. LH, 90

Wang would thus have us accept our parasitism within a given order, an order functioning as an economy against excess. Here the appearance of excess, of transcendence, ideality, is itself read simply as the mask of a different parasite, one with the form of an ideal economy organising the play of expenditure without reserve. Wang shifts between the identities of these two parasites, living on the borders, in the margins of a text which he has consumed - which has consumed him, devouring the space of his memory from his earliest years - but hoping also at the heart of his text to preserve the jewel of a non-parasitic truth, the splendour of worldly integrity [13].

But where? Heaven acts spontaneously; things come to be by chance; everything bears the mark of conflict:

> If Heaven had produced its creatures on purpose, it ought to have brought them to love each other, and not to prey upon and destroy one another. LH 104

However

> The sighs of ten thousand people cannot move Heaven. LH 113

Heaven simply names the processes of natural fate and destiny (LH 119) - its virtue is less than human virtue (LH 123). In this economy, skill, cunning, strength, speed are the marks of the parasite's survival, and are explanatory categories enough for life's changes, neither requiring a theory of <u>wuxing</u> nor susceptible of containment within it.

If at times Wang seems to fit Heaven into an economy of virtue ("It is human law to like good, and hate evil, to do

good as reward, and to inflict evil as punishment. The law of Heaven must be the same." LH 125), what is in fact at stake is a fundamental law of the universe whereby one principle generates its opposite, or another, necessarily and inevitably, as a balancing or culminating response ("Walking upon frost, one knows that hard ice will necessarily follow. This is Heaven's law." LH 127). And yet the authority of Heaven is retained:

> The heart of high Heaven is in the sages. When Heaven reprimands, it is done through the mouths of the Sages. LH 129.

This double-handed preservation and destruction of Heaven, in a doubling of the wisdom of Confucius and Laozi, leaves Wang Chong with a language for ethics which, in eschewing pragmatism and extolling the Sages, borrows a rhetoric in excess of argument, shining in the light reflected from sagely wisdom, this disguising the only possible authority open to his text beyond critique, that of productive fiction [14]. Wang criticises Confucius yet clings to him: there will always be the genius of criticism, yet also that charisma in the sage which still eludes criticism. Luck, chance, fortune are the names of the game, and the sage's supremacy is his fated (ming) ability to respond to fortune to the utmost. Here, even if Confucian ethical categories are retained, ("By nature man is endowed with the five virtues" LH 104; "Confucius took (Zilu) under his guidance. By degrees he polished and instructed him. The more he advanced in knowledge, the

more he lost his fierceness, and his arrogance was broken...this is a stirring example of how a man's character was changed from bad into good" LH 376), the ground of ethics is ambiguous.

In many readings it is a naturalistic fate which equally produces good and evil; but the Sage can also undo the original endowment of heaven ("he who has a wicked nature changes his will and his doings if he happens to be taught by a sage, although he was not endowed with a good character by heaven" LH 377); and while human nature can be a mix of good and evil, an assumption also emerges that evil is something secondary, a disorder contaminating original goodness ("Men who are not good have a disease of their nature" LH 377) [15]. Ethical training is like a Daoist alchemy working to transmute base natures into ren:

> "Provided that bad-natured men are of the same kind as good-natured ones, then they can be induced to do good. Should they be of a different kind, they can also be coerced in the same manner as the Daoists cast gems...Enlightened with learning and familiarised with virtue, they too begin by and by to practice benevolence and equity." LH 378.

Thus in a text which opens the issue of the parasite the implications of parasitism are evaded. The mutual devouring of each by each, the perception of each as use-value for the other, the existence of all within an economy that cannot know excess, entails equally the reduction of ren as co-operation to the idealised form of parasitism, the reading of virtue and perfection as a play of power towards a pointless self-enhancement, and the

inevitable form of human parasitism on nature as a devouring of animal and natural reserves in a one way process that gives nothing in return.

3. THE BUDDHIST TRANSFORMATION.

The issue of parasitism could also figure in our reading of Buddhism, but it is rather on the question of enlightenment, and the possible conflict between enlightenment and ethics, that we will focus here as one means of reading through Buddhism to the text of Zhu Xi.

To read the implications of Buddhism for Confucian thinking, even at the major points of intersection - monasticism and the institutions of the family; the foreigner and national identity; transcendence and social engagement; metaphysics and pragmatic ethics; simplicity, meditation and the burden of scholarship; the contrasts of language; the question of rebirth; the alternative traditions of bodhisattva and sage - would be an exercise demanding full attention in its own right. Here we will look at the implications of one school of Buddhism - Chan (Zen) - which was a powerful presence in Song China, considering both the practical and philosophical aspects present in it [16].

The famous contrast in Chan between northern and southern schools, focussed on the alternative priority given to gradual or sudden enlightenment, is in one sense an issue peculiar neither to Chan, nor indeed to the

Chinese context as such; it is a dilemma of the mind in search of wholeness or salvation (focussed in St. Paul, as we noted in chapter three, as a contrast between faith and works or faith and the law). Both sides of the dilemma are there in Confucius: an emphasis on xue that leads to completion of the self late in life, but also an emphasis on the proximity of perfection: if I want ren, it is here at hand. If the stress on immediacy, spontaneity, directness came to be a central preserve of Daoism - and in all major aspects Chan is Zhuangzi's rebirth in Buddhist clothing - some first perceptions of the Confucian-Buddhist contrast saw Confucius as the master of simplicity in relation to the burdensome discipline of the Buddhist vinaya:

> According to the doctrine of the Buddha, the Way of the sage, though remote, may be reached through the accumulation of learning. Only with the ending of the ties (of existence), and the shining forth of the mirror (of the mind), can there come the response of gradual (chien) enlightenment. But according to the doctrine of Confucius, the Way of the sage is mysterious, even though Yen (Hui) almost reached it. One must become identified with non-being (wu) and mirror the whole, for Truth (li) is one and final. Xie Lingyun, Bianzong Lun (Discussion of Essentials); Fung, 1953: 274-5.

The image of the mirror is of primary significance, as also the concept li (here translated as "truth" but elsewhere more generally as "principle" or "pattern") which became a lynchpin of Zhu Xi's teaching. The mirror serves to focus a reading of the person as originally good in a radical sense; the doctrine of radical goodness was furthermore, in certain Budhist schools, extended to all

reality, according to the notion that all beings possess the Buddha-mind or Buddha-nature, and on the assumption that the worlds of nirvana and samsara are in one sense equivalent, it being the defilements of desiring experience that makes them different.

The idea of equivalence entails a theory of perception. Building on the original Buddhist teaching that desire and attachment are the prime causes of suffering, the claim here is that samsara is simply a product of disordered perception and action - it possesses no essential structure itself, but arises as a function of the mind's confusion. The clear mind is like the mirror, unattached and reflecting things as they really are without interference; it is thus a principle of radical subjectivity, permanently anterior to any particular state of mind but suffusing states of mind with the qualities of clarity and compassion.

At stake here in part is an application of the idea of dependent co-origination: entities and qualities are not self-subsistent but come into being in relation to each other and, as items of knowledge, exist through the mediation of particular structures of interpretation. The worlds inhabited by animals and by persons are different worlds, not the same world differently perceived: the differently structured perceptual and nervous systems, and the absence or presence of a linguistic system, create the world differently in each case. The notion that it might

be the same world differently perceived presupposes the existence of an unbiassed, more an "unstructured", simple observer capable of adjudicating between different perceptions and, an option which Chan in principle should exclude, capable also of giving an account of things as they really are. Samsara is the co-origination of a desiring agent and a world structured by desire.

But what of the language of truth (li) and the function of the mind as mirror: surely on this basis the mind works as a simple unbiased observer, yet in terms of what we have just said nirvana and any transcendent reality should also be read as a structure of the mind? On the basis of Nagarjuna's dialectic, a philosophical cornerstone for Chan, the idea that the world is in such a way is neither admissible nor inadmissible, since it can neither be demonstrated nor refuted; equally, the idea of the world as a human construct is neither admissible nor inadmissible for the same reason: both its denial and its assertion presuppose access to a world unconstructed, to a real ground of judgement. Nagarjuna holds that the ground of judgement is undecidable and permanently elusive. Thus while the mirror gives an appearance of a real world - the image suggesting a commitment to ontological and individual realism - the real world of the enlightened mind (nirvana) is in fact simply the co-origination of the world and a mind newly structured, through Buddhist practice, to the form of a mirror. The mind, as the mirror, at some point passes away. Or does it?

One early commitment in Chinese Buddhism was to some concept of a permanent abiding self (in contrast to the Buddha's teaching on anatta, no-self), to a mind thus that might be radically interior and the subject of rebirth. In some aspects the language of Chan suggests retention of this idea of the essential self, the mind as subject of enlightenment and the ground of true perception. This is, for instance, apparent in the famous verses of Hui-neng, the sixth patriarch:

> Bodhi originally has no tree,
> The mirror also has no stand.
> Buddha nature is always clean and pure;
> Where is there room for dust?

and

> The mind is the bodhi tree,
> The body is the mirror stand.
> The mirror is originally clean and pure
> Where can it be stained by dust. Yampolsky 1967: 132.

The thrust of these verses is to deny the premise of the gradualist approach which, also taking the mind as a mirror, used the image of constant dusting as a way of focussing the need for steady cumulative practice; Hui-neng's point is that, through a radical shift in one's perspective, through the moment of enlightenment, one comes to see one's own nature as always originally clear, empty, void of any differentiating or individualising characteristic. The mind is always clear, no dust ever settles, the point is to realise this [17].

Realisation is a conversion in which a completely new

stance on life is assumed; but central to that stance, suggested at least by the form of the verses as we have them here, is some hold on the mind as fundamental bedrock: the mirror and the Buddha-nature do exist. A later version of the same text, however, carries an important modification, and with it a more radical doctrine of emptiness. In this the third line of the first verse is changed: instead of reading "Buddha nature is always clean and pure", it reads "Since the beginning not a thing is" - rather than a substantial mind we thus have a doctrine of no-mind, and the issues at stake in this are the significant ones for us here.

(i) The Doctrine of No-Mind (wuxin)

A story on the original transmission of mind declares that the Buddha showed a flower to his disciples to test their enlightenment, and one only, Kasyapa, smiled his appreciation of the gesture. One reading might be that the gesture is towards naturalness: the flower grows, blooms, dies, unforced, striving for nothing, simply being what it is - that this naturalness is its Buddha-nature, and that to be enlightened is to live in a similarly non-striving way. At once this opens us to the kind of naturalism encountered with Laozi and Zhuangzi and to its problems; what in man is natural, how can that be judged, what follows from an affirmation of naturalness? The flower perhaps focusses the light side of nature but what of the dark, the moments of savagery and violence, how much of

that is natural to man, in what sense, to what extent?

One position here is reminiscent of Krishna's advice to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita: from the viewpoint of Buddha-nature there is neither killing nor being killed. Buddha-nature is non-active and beyond destruction, but what is the status of this teaching and what position does it leave for ethics? Are we presented here simply with a koan (kong'an), a puzzle directed towards provoking enlightenment, one which leaves the ethical issues around killing in the background to be resolved later by the enlightened mind; or are we presented with a radical separation of spiritual and social worlds, of enlightenment and ethical practice, such as Krishna suggests when he leaves the field of social dharma intact and argues the rightness of killing in war as part of fulfilling one's social duties? How here should we read stories of the Chan masters who were at times violent towards their disciplies, even killing them, in their move to find that sudden gesture which might provoke satori?

Since Chan enlightenment is situated in a context of practice which is both meditational and moral, any idea of naturalness espoused is problematised from the start; which indicates that the enlightened instincts of the Chan adept (I eat when hungry, drink when thirsty) are to be distinguished from the instincts of the person still living in samsara, precisely becasue they are instincts structured through discipline. One Tang dynasty saying indicates the

basis underlying a revised naturalness:

> Thirty years ago, before I began the study of Chan, I said: "Mountans are mountains, waters are waters." After I got an insight into the truth of Chan through the instruction of a good master, I said, "Mountains are not mountains, waters are not waters." But now, having attained the abode of final rest (that is, Awakening), I say, "Mountains are really mountains, waters are really waters." (Abe, 1985: 4).

It is in the middle stage of this progression that anything natural disappears: what might objectively seem to have the utmost solidity and presence is rendered empty, insubstantial, and when this insight is applied to values, all are rendered conventional rather than absolute. Here the move is the same as Zhuangzi's in his reversal of Confucian ethical and social distinctions, and it transpires that all value-systems are seen as games: they possess no necessary intrinsic merit, but are ways of getting on in certain circumstances, and if this problematises any concepts of good, it no less problematises concepts of evil, at the same time diminishing any ability to hold such concepts in an unreflective way.

One means to focus the issue here is to note that the world is mind-dependent, constituted by the mind's powers of perception and language. "Mountains" are not mountains, they are signifiers, and the separation of language from the world, the insertion of the human in a play of perception and language which cannot be said to refer, since the judgement on reference presupposes some means of escape from the play, is the insight focussed in this stage

of development. The final stage in the progression, however, is the one that must be affirmed if judgements about the world, and about ethics, are to be securely forwarded. I take this stage as marking a shift from the emptiness of the world to the emptiness of the mind and of individual identity. One aspect is that the mind's projective powers are dissolved: the tendency to structure the world through the forms of desire for ontological security is overcome insofar as the mind conceived as a real entity is itself dissolved.

More precisely, the mind as the final object of attachment is released, as indicated in Chaochou's (778 -897) famous koan wu:

> A monk asked Chaochou: "Has a dog the Buddha-nature or not?" Chaochou said, "Wu", meaning "No"! Completely puzzled, the monk thought to himself, "From the highest Buddhas down to the lowliest creatures such as ants, all have the Buddha-nature. Why is it that a dog has not? Why did Chaochou say "No" (Wu)? Why? Why? Park 1983:75

While the problem is put in terms of a dog's Buddha-nature, at stake more fundamentally is the problem of attachment to the very idea of Buddha-nature: the idea itself can become an obstacle to enlightenment if it is affirmed as any kind of entity, whether subjective, transpersonal, or common to all living forms. To speak of Buddha-nature is to speak of a way of being without desire or attachment, where the problem of death has been transcended; if hypostasised, however, Buddha-nature can serve as a shield precisely against the problem of death.

Enlightenment, the great awakening, is spoken of as the moment of death, which it is more profoundly than any biological event since it opens the radical contingency and impermanence of the person. If the movement towards enlightenment involves a gradual deepening of the concept "I", a shift of the principle of subjectivity away from any particular states of mind with which it might be confused, enlightenment empties the "I" of any particular significance, and in the process releases the world back into the only way of being it might have for the person: whatever one may say of mountains "in themselves", to the person freed from projection, and from the quest for an "I" that might transcend time and change, mountains can only be mountains.

While the natural world might be thus reconstituted, and the abiding features of the social world reaffirmed as the arena for human action (as occurs for instance in the famous ox-herding pictures), the question of an ethical stance, as of a preferred form of social engagement - two vital areas with Zhu Xi - remains completely open: we have no evaluation of the behaviour of Chan masters such as Lin Ji, whilst the development of Zen in Japan, and its links with the ethics of the Samurai, points to the profound ambivalence on ethics that could arise within the Chan/Zen tradition. The movement towards excess in order to overcome the self and release deeper springs of imagination and activity - evident in contemporary form, for instance, in the theatre and writings of Artaud and Bataille - carries

no assurance of ethical value, that value being only a function of the context within which the moment of excess occurs. For Artaud and Bataille it is the bounded moment of theatre or literature that is this context, for Chan it can be the moment either of monastic or of martial discipline. If the latter becomes more fully an issue in Japan, the former as the primary Chan context in China marks the limitation in the outworking of Buddhist enlightened life as this is judged from Zhu Xi's perspective.

The monastery may exist as the privileged context for nurturing enlightenment, and appear as such as a moral order - however much the principle of respect for life might itself be abrogated in the drive towards enlightened life as the only worthwhile form - but the limitation of a monastic ethic in relation to larger problems of social order, even when that ethic is instinct with the virtue of compassion, is the point on which Zhu focusses. Here, as we consider how he reads the Confucian mind, and sets the question of enlightenment within a broader framework of social concern, scholarship and ethical self-cultivation, we can also ask whether the Confucian sage might transcend anxiety in the face of death, diminishment, and the structure of his own mind and world, or whether Buddhist equanimity remained for Zhu a permanently elusive quality.

CHAPTER 6

REN IN THE CONTEXT OF ZHU XI'S PHILOSOPHY

It was against the tow of a Chan vision that Zhu at first struggled, being in youth inspired by Buddhist philosophy and for a time also incumbent of a Daoist temple. The failure of Buddhism in the political and social realms, at a point when Northern China lay in the hands of invaders, was a powerful motive force in Zhu's advocacy of Confucianism, but the stream of neo-Confucian thinking in which he inserted himself, and which he then harnessed as the supreme intellectual and spiritual resource, is one itself deepened and transformed by the lessons of Daoist and Buddhist piety, and represents one from a range of Confucian options available in the Song period [1].

Chan emphasised the given purity of the Buddha-mind beyond the defilements of desiring experience, and so focussed in acute form the problem of human nature that had never been satisfactorily resolved within a Confucian framework: how to perceive xing, as good, bad, or an admixture of conflicting qualities? Building on the work of Cheng Yi in particular, Zhu put forward a Confucian vision of innate goodness that served to liberate a Confucian life of moral and spiritual enthusiasm: to what extent his philosophy managed the problem of evil as it had plagued

Confucianism earlier will be one of our chief considerations here in interpreting his doctrine of ren.

1. ZHU'S METAPHYSICS: AN OUTLINE.

(i) Taiji

From the reserves of thinking already available in the first developments of Song neo-Confucianism Zhu spun an all-embracing metaphysic, appropriately referred to as a form of organicism, in which Heaven, Earth, Man and the ten thousand things are interlinked according to a fundamental pattern (li) of being and goodness. These transcendental attributes of all existents are grounded in xing, nature, when this is understood both as human nature and as the nature of all that is. Xing itself is grounded in taiji, the Great Ultimate, the principle which Zhu developed from Zhou Dunyi as a cornerstone of his metaphysic, and taiji is a point of both radical immanence and radical transcendence, containing all li collectively as the principles of individual existents and as the principles of forms of energy.

As the respository of li taiji is on some readings considered identical with the totality of li, and thus constitutes a way of naming that totality as such:

> The Great Ultimate (Supreme Ultimate) (taiji) is simply the undifferentiated and maximum principle (li). It cannot be described in terms of material force (qi) or physical form. Among ancient classics, and explanation of the Great Ultimate can only be found in the Book of Changes (Yijing). In its 'Appended remarks' it is said "In the system of Change

there is the Great Ultimate." Change is nothing but the change and transformation of yin and yang (passive and active cosmic forces). The principle of their change and trnasformation is the Great Ultimate. Beixi ziyi 141; Chan 1986a:115

Taiji simply means li. Why is li called ji? Ji means reaching the ultimate, because it is in the center serving as the axis. Huangji (supreme principle governing the empire), beiji (the North Pole), etc., all have the meaning of being in the center... Take the ridgepole of a roof. It is called wuji (terminus of a building). It is simply the converging point of all building materials from the various directions, reaching their terminus at this center. They are distributed to the various controlling members, balanced and well distributed in all directions without any excess or deficiency. In the case of a pagoda, its pointed top is called the ultimate. In the case of the Polar Star, stars all around revolve around it but it itself does not move and thus is the axis of heaven. In the case of the Great Ultimate, however, it is understood in terms of principle. The reason why heaven forever rotates, the earth forever exists, and man and things forever produce and reproduce without cease, is that each of these does so not of its own intention but because in each case it is directed by the principle inherent in it. Hence each naturally does so. The Great Ultimate is so called because, being the master of heaven and earth, it is undifferentiated to the highest degree. The principles of heaven and earth and the ten thousand things all converge on it and extend to the highest degree and do not go any further. As it is scattered to become heaven, earth, man, and things, each of these is balanced and well distributed without any deficiency. Hence it is called the Great Ultimate.

The Great Ultimate simply means the sum total of the principles of heaven, earth, and the ten thousand things. It cannot be separated from them and be spoken of apart from them. As soon as principle is separated from them, principle and things become two different sections. Ibid. 143 and 144; Chan 1986a:117-8.[2]

Chen Chun and Zhu Xi do not however offer a final account of taiji and li that is without difficulty or contradiction, and we might note certain of the difficulties arising so far. First, while taiji is a centering and foundational principle in relation to the

psychophysical universe, it is also a principle of dismemberment and dissemination: taiji is "scattered to become heaven, earth, man and things." We have here a proximity to the Hindu doctrine of creation, where the primal man, purusha, is dismembered to give birth to the universe; a proximity also to the Stoic and Christian doctrine of the logos spermatikos, the divine logos that is disseminated in seedlike form within all entities; a proximity again to Kabbalist and neo-Platonist notions of the primal light that is fragmented to exist as the divine spark in the heart of all individuals. There is thus a tension in the reading of taiji between notions of original foundation and disseminated principles. And second, there is a tension around the idea that taiji might be "the master of heaven and earth": as we already noted with Dong Zhongshu on tian, there is the problem of the kind of mastery that can be presupposed within a naturalistic, uncreated universe. A.C. Graham fixes well some of the attendant issues here:

> The Sung philosophers do not conceive the origin of things as "creation" by Someone standing outside the universe, but as "breeding" "growth" (sheng) from Something at the root of the universe. The analogy behind their thinking is not a man making a pot, but rather a tree growing from its hidden root and branching out ... The idea that the universe must have had a beginning in time, which seems obvious, even a logical necessity, to many Europeans, is quite foreign to Chinese thought; thus Chu Hsi, who held with Shao Yung that the universe is annihilated and reborn every 129,000 years, took it for granted that there were other cycles before the present cycle. Nor, of course, did the Sung philosophers have any idea of universal causation, in terms of which every event is explicable except the event which started the series. On the contrary, it is precisely because the

> production and growth of things is not explained by preceding physical causes that it is necessary for them to postulate an unseen source out of which things are continually manifesting themselves. For example, in Chou Tun-i's system the Supreme Ultimate does not stand at the beginning of time; the Yin and Yang are constantly growing out of the Supreme Ultimate, and it is this which keeps the universe in motion. Graham 1958:108-9 [3].

Taiji is thus the foundational, disseminated principle within an eternal universe. Part of the issue of origination is focussed also in the designation of taiji as wuji (the Ultimate of emptiness of non-being):

> Master Lienxi (Zhou Dunyi) said: The Ultimate of Nonbeing, wuji, and also the Great Ultimate, taiji. "The operations of Heaven have neither sound nor smell." And yet this (Ultimate of Nonbeing) is really the axis of creation and the foundation of things of all kinds (ultimate being). Therefore "the Ultimate of Nonbeing and also the Great Ultimate." It does not mean that outside the Great Ultimate there is an Ultimate of Nonbeing. (Zhu Xi, Commentary on the Taijitu Shuo). Chan 1967:5

> Having neither sound nor smell simply means having no physical shape. As soon as there is any sound or smell, physical shape is involved and the Great Ultimate will be reduced to a direction and a location and can no longer be called the Ultimate of Nonbeing. In using the saying about sound and smell, Wen Gong (Zhu Xi) was explaining the fundamental meaning of the term taiji. The expression is not compelling but the principle is clear by itself.
> Chan 1986a:189

Given that the Ultimate is named in two ways we can acknowledge that two themes are at issue. Firstly, by speaking of taiji Zhu separates a Confucian metaphysic from Buddhist and Daoist positions where the theme of wu (emptiness) was central. This was not an idle move, since major consequences followed for one's way of operating in the world, and Zhu's metaphysic is not simply speculative but geared towards providing a basis for Confucian action.

And secondly, by speaking of wuji Zhu argues a sense of the Ultimate that lies beyond characterisation, thus affirming that it cannot be identified with the totality tout court, but that it is also in some manner "more" than li.

Taiji/wuji is also more than Heaven. In fundamental terms taiji generates yin and yang and yin and yang generate the wuxing, in turn generating heaven and earth; but it is not clear whether yin and yang and wuxing, as one constitutive system, are generated from taiji, or whether they are part of the original structure of taiji itself. Insofar as constituted by yin and yang, taiji is seen as a field of energy marked by the permanent interplay of opposite forces. But again, what that interplay might be and whether we are dealing here with metaphysical principles, or with a consistently physical and materialist system, is difficult to determine. As we have seen, Zhu's universe is eternal, its patterns of change cyclical rather than teleological, though within each cycle there is a process of completion appropriate to it. But if taiji names the principle behind the universe, rather than an aspect of the way in which the universe is, then we have a problematic notion of purely metaphysical change within taiji:

> In the final analysis, before there was heaven, earth and the ten thousand things there was necessarily this principle. But this principle (li) is not something suspended in the air. As soon as there is the principle of heaven, earth, and the ten thousand things there is their material force (qi), and as soon as there is their material force, principle is preserved in their midst. As Master Zhou has said, "The Great Ultimate through activity generates yang"

> and "through tranquillity generates yin." This means that as there is the principle of activity, it can be active and produce yang. As soon as yang is generated through activity, the principle is already completely present in the activity of yang. As there is the principle of tranquillity, it can be tranquil and produce yin. As soon as yin is generated through tranquillity, the principle is already completely present in the tranquillity of yin. This being the case, as soon as there is principle, there is material force, and as soon as there is material force, principle is completely present in it. The way they are connected leaves not the slightest cleavage. How can we distinguish which comes first and which later? As it has been said, "Activity and tranquillity have no beginning and yin and yang have no starting point." If they could be distinguished as being earlier and later, principle would be one-sided and not undifferentiated and completely merged to the highest degree. Chan 1986a:118 [4]

The formulation of ideas here is rendered problematic insofar as Zhu, for all his attempts to provide a unified account of the universe, finally offers a system which remains fundamentally dualistic. He maintains a fundamental and unresolved contrast between li (principle, pattern, form) and qi (material force, energy), reckoning them in one reading to be eternal and equally formative and constitutive of the universe, and in another to be hierarchically ordered, with metaphysical prioity consistently assigned to li over qi, and with a doubling of the structure of things insofar as much that can be said of qi is also said first of li [5]. Thus, yin and yang and wuxing are, strictly speaking, forms of qi, yet as indicated in the text above, they also presuppose some specific li as their individual structuring principles: Chen acknowledges that there is "the principle of activity" which can be "active and produce yang", thus separating yang as qi from the specific principle (li) that gives rise

to it, and leaving us with the question whether yin and yang should not each be thought of under a double-aspect of li and qi. Yet there is another issue here, when Chen speaks of li producing yang, for elsewhere it is stressed that li can produce nothing, but rather constitutes a passive world of metaphysical form that is expressed and appropriated through qi's productive force.

There are thus problems in the designation of taiji as li, insofar as, and in those places where, Zhu is clear that li is a metaphysical principle, whilst qi is the characterisation of the universe as psychophysical energy; and there is an evident ambivalence in Zhu's reading of taiji between its designation as (the totality of) li, and its (hidden, subliminal) designation as qi. On li, for instance, Zhu declares:

> Li has neither emotion nor will; can neither plan nor create...
> Li is a clear world of emptiness; it has no form and no ability to create anything. Zhuzi yulei 1:3a

All movement, change and becoming in the universe is associated with qi, and if qi is contained within taiji - again, one of the standard readings of Zhu's position - then taiji itself is characterised by change and movement and thus marks a reality subject to time.

The questions arising here relate in essence to two crucial issues; the status of taiji within Zhu's philosophy as a whole, and the provenance of the term taiji. Traditionally Zhu is reckoned to have based his philosophy

on taiji; to have acknowledged Zhou Dunyi's Taijitu shuo as a profoundly fruitful articulation of taiji, and thus as a fundamental moment of the daotong; and to have linked taiji with li as his foundational metaphysic. Yet Zhu's style of neo-Confucianism became known as lixue (the study of principle), an acknowledgement that li is throughout the guiding term by which his philosophy is ordered, rather than taiji. And it has recently been argued that taiji is not a fully integrated term within his system - not being a consistently hermeneutical and foundation principle in the way that li is - but rather occurs in 2 precise contexts of commentary, when Zhu comments on the Taijitushuo, and on the "Appended Remarks" of the Yijing, where taiji made its first appearance as a philosophical term. The conclusion here is that taiji sits rather awkwardly as a supplement to Zhu's philosophy.

In developing the Taijitushuo Zhou Dunyi was drawing on and modifying Daoist philosophy. In Zhou's work, as in the tradition before him, taiji has the connotation of qi rather than li: it appears as the ultimate designation of the material energy of the universe in its foundational aspect, not unlike the materia prima of the scholastics (if this is taken to be a term of physical rather than metaphysical designation)[6]. According to one recent commentary

> In the generative theories offered by these philosophical schools (ie philosophical schools from the Han to the Tang) T'ai-chi was commonly regarded as yüan-ch'i (the ultimate or original material force).

And in one theory of generation, the Five Evolution, (wu-yün) theory, a sequence is followed from Great Change, taiyi, to Great Beginning, taichu, to Great origin, taishi, to Great Simplicity, taisu, to Great Ultimate, taiji. Here taiji is the last in a sequences of existences prior to the separation of heaven and earth and

> is regarded as the place closest to individual things in the real world...where "physical nature and physical form are already provided.[7]

It was Zhu Xi who modified this reading of taiji to bring it into line with li rather than qi, whilst preserving in the process the ambivalence we have noted. And indeed, on the rare occasions when Zhu speaks of taiji other than in direct commentary on Zhou Dunyig and the Appended Remarks he seems overtly to preserve its earlier linkage with qi:

> It is necessary to see taiji within the ever-moving qi and to see the original nature, benxing, within the ever-working mind. To depart from the ever-moving qi in order to seek for taiji or to depart from the ever-working mind in order to seek for the original nature will probably lead to the absurdity of the Buddhists and Daoists. Zhuzi daquan 32:14a

(ii) Taiji, li, and qi.

The problem of the excess of reality beyond the categories of its coherence is the crucial element encountered by Zhu in his attempt to formulate an account of taiji that might integrate perceptions of immanence and transcendence within a naturalistically conceived universe. Taiji is at once beyond and within, negative and positive, emptiness and plenitude, the ultimate source of all and the inmost proper ground of being of any existent. In part the problems of ambivalent characterisation encountered here

have already been noticed in relation to Dong Zhongshu's alternating descriptions of heaven, (tian) and nature, xing. By making taiji the foundation of tian, Dong's difficulty with tian is moved to a more abstract metaphysical level, but the difficulty is preserved nonetheless.

The issue for both Dong and Zhu here, in dealing with a fundamental uncertainty about the basic structure of things - where for Zhu qi becomes the source of evil and disruption - is the same kind of issue at work in Christian thinking, where the doctrine of original sin is an attempt to focus a basic flaw running through all creation. For Zhu, though, it is not simply the flawed aspect of things that is an issue (we shall look at this in considering qi), but the very existence of change as such. The vision of li is of an unchanging metaphysical paradise, of a world of pure and constant form at the heart of change, which it is the purpose of the perfected mind to understand [9].

Taiji is the collected network of li. Li constitute principles and forms of differentiations, but taiji as li is an undifferentiated oneness:

> Collectively speaking, there is only one undifferentiated principle. And there is only one Great Ultimate. Separately speaking, heaven, earth, and the ten thousand things each have their principle, and each has its own Great Ultimate. But all of them are completely merged with each other without any deficiency. When they are considered separately, they become many principles, but when the ten thousand things are considered collectively, the ten thousand things are merged with one another and are only one Great Ultimate. As man has this principle inherent in his mind, his mind becomes the Great Ultimate. That is why Master Shao (Shao Yung) said, "The Way is the Great Ultimate," and also said,

> "The mind is the Great Ultimate."
> By the Way being the Great Ultimate is meant the Way is identical with the Great Ultimate and there are not two different principles. And by the mind being the Great Ultimate is meant that all principles are gathered in the mind which is undifferentiated and is one principle. As the Way operates, it comes forth to deal with things in many ways and numerous details, each obtaining the principle as it should be and each becoming a Great Ultimate. But when the ten thousand things are collectively spoken of, in reality there is only one principle as before, which is the one Great Ultimate completely merged as one. Take for example a large lump of mercury. How perfectly round! As it is scattered into tens of thousands of small lumps, every one is round. When tens of thousands of lumps are combined to become once more a big lump, it is as round as before. This is precisely the meaning of Chen Jisou's analogy, "When the moon is reflected on the river, it is round (perfect) everywhere." That is why the Great Ultimate stands outside of heaven, earth, and the ten thousand things yet operates in their midst, and existed before the Ultimate of Nonbeing countless generations before but penetrates the Ultimate of Nonbeing countless generations later. From countless generations in the past to the very end of countless generations to come, generally speaking there is only one undifferentiated principle which is collectively one Great Ultimate. In its operation, this principle is round (perfect) everywhere, without any deficiency anywhere. As soon as it is deficient anywhere, it becomes partial and cannot be called the Great Ultimate. In its basic substance, the Great Ultimate is naturally round (perfect). Beixi ziyi 147; Chan 1986a:119

Here we see how a commitment to ontological realism ascribes a priority to taiji over wuji, in a statement that is stronger than those we have noted so far as specifications of their inter-relationship. More importantly, though, we see how the reference to li apparently incorporates two languages kept quite distinct in Western philosophy, the language of transcendentals and of universals. As a specification of transcendental properties, there is a sense in which li can be predicated of all entities (as beauty, truth, goodness), and thus a

sense in which all entities can be said to be the same analogically. But as a specification of universal forms li should of necessity remain a concept specifying differentiation, not sameness: the forms of a tree, of a house, of a star, are different, and there does not seem to be any gain by saying that they are all one and undifferentiated within taiji [10].

While this would emerge as a first criticism there is however a case against reading li as form or principle in the sense of universals. Fung Yu-la takes li to specify universal, in the manner of the Platonic Forms, but A.C. Graham argues that a contrast between universals and particulars is not part of the neo-Confucian philosophical agenda. Thus, while he acknowledges the various ways in which li can be read as specific structuring form, as individualising principle, he observes that what is at stake here is, rather, a vision of an organic universe where entities come to be from each other and merge back into each other. Following the etymology of li as reference to the lines in jade or the grain in wood he observes:

> Principle (li) seems to be conceived as a network of veins; however much they diverge from each other, the veins prove when we "extend" them to be one; on the other hand we can also go on indefinitely making finer and finer distinctions among them, finding as we proceed that not only classes but individuals and parts of individuals have li which distinguish them from each other. Graham 1958:13.

Again, the contrasting metaphors of growth from a primal

seed and fashioning from primal clay might be instructive. If the universe is originally a seed, then everything within it grows from, remains linked with, and returns to the one originating source, and there can be a sense in which the li of different things presuppose each other and contain each other: taiji is thus complete and undifferentiated within each entity. If however a creator imparts specific focus on an original formlessness, differentiating it into specific types and categories, then the differences between entities, and their individualising principles, will be more a matter for concern than their sameness and interconnectedness.

Eric Voegelin's comment on the experience of participation in a community of being, insofar as this is worked out at an early mythic stage of experience, serves as a valuable elaboration of the kind of worldview at stake in the philosophy of li:

> Whatever man may be, he knows himself a part of being. The great stream of being, in which he flows while it flows through him, is the same stream to which belongs everything else that drifts into his perspective. The community of being is experienced with such intimacy that the consubstantiality of the partners will override the separateness of substances. We move in a charmed community where everything that meets us has force and will and feelings...where the underground sameness of being is a conductor for magic currents of good or evil force that will subterreaneously reach the superficially unreachable partner, where things are the same and not the same, and can change into each other. Voegelin 1956:3

[Voegelin introduces the experience of participation as the first aspect of "the process of symbolisation"; it is of interest also that he identifies the second aspect as preoccupation

with the process of change, and concern with constancy beyond change. We have already noted how for Zhu Xi li designates a world of constant, unchanging perfection. After speaking of li as interconnectedness, Graham immediately goes on to note how the next basic connotation of li is permanence:

> The Ch'eng brothers lay great stress on the idea that li is changeless, that behind the perpetual flux of the visible universe there are "constant principles" (ch'ang li), "fixed principles" (ting li), "real principles" (shih li). They also assume, like Ch'en Ch'un, that imperviousness to change is a proof of reality (shih, literally "solid"), although they do not, like the Buddhists, regard change as a proof of unreality (hsu, literally "void"). Graham 1958:14.]

If li marks the constant, unchanging normative pattern underlying and informing things, thus constituting the specific nature xing of things (and the source here is often given through the compound term xingli), then qi represents flux, turbulence, change, and also that process of darkening and limitation in entities whereby their normative structure is obscured. The endowment of things and persons with a particular type and quality of qi is the consequence of ming, usually translated "fate" or "destiny" but, in the absence of any symbol that might designate a power and a process governing destiny, just as appropriately translated 'chance' or 'fortune' [11].

With Dong Zhongshu we encountered the notion that man was the point of perfection in the process of nature. We encounter the same notion in Chen Chun and Zhu Xi, and in a

sense the issue is here more strongly put: if qi is the original material that comes to be formed as different entities, then man (and perfected man, as sage) is the only worthwhile form it can take: it is not simply that all entities have their appropriate standards of perfection, in relation to which individual tokens or markers of a class are judged; it is rather that any entity other than a sage has an imperfect, "cloudy" portion of qi that fails to let xingli fully manifest itself: it would be better for a tree to be a perfect man than a perfect tree (there is no concept of a perfect tree):

> Originally there is only one material force. In its division there are the yin and yang. Yin and yang are further divided into Wuxing. As the two and the five divide and combine in their operation as they do, irregularities and inequality ensure. Some of them are pure and others impure. Some are thick and others thin. Let us talk about man and things together. They share the same material force, but man is endowed with material force in its correctness whereas things are endowed with it in its partial character. In man material force moves freely whereas in things it is obstructed...Having received the excellence of the Wuxing, man is therefore the most intelligent of the ten thousand things. The qi of things is blocked up and does not move freely, like smoke which is shut in. That is why things do not understand principles. Beixi ziyi 3; Chan 1986a:39-40

The implication, here and elswhere, is that the qi of things is always and necessarily blocked, and that this constitutes a kind of flaw: man only "is endowed with material force in its correctness." Yet the reason for this flaw remains beyond explanation, and while qi remains the source and locus of evil and disruption within Zhu's metaphysic, the reason why qi is thus - or the reason why some qi takes the blocked form of material things rather

than all qi taking the perfected form of the sage - lies permanently out of account. Thus we shall see that, while on one level, in his theory of li, Zhu Xi solves the problem of the goodness of human nature, on another level, as regards the qi, the existence of evil and the permanent anxiety it could cause in he quest for moral perfection remained a troubling issue.

(iii) Xing (nature) and xin (mind)

Zhu Xi presents an account of the unity of the world in terms of two separate yet interacting discourses, that relating to li and that relating to qi; it is his failure adequately to integrate these discourses that makes his system a form of dualism. From the perspective of li, all entities are united, and indeed are in a sense the same, insofar as the totality of li as taiji is present in any entity as its inmost structuring source and foundation. From the perspective of qi all entities are also united, and in a sense the same, insofar as it is the same basic matter and energy that constitutes their substance.

Because li and qi constitute two perspectives from which to view the nature and structure of things and persons, and because qi, even though in a sense secondary in relation to the metaphysical order of li, nonetheless controls the manifestation of li on the forming nature of any entity, then the ontological "goodness" that is ascribed to li remains subject to the chance and haphazard endowment of qi as opaque or transparent. This raises particularly vexing

issues for Zhu Xi in terms of a possible perception of the person, insofar as the dualism of li and qi is worked out at the heart of personal identity: the nature (xing) of the person is understood in terms of li, while mind (xin) is an aspect of qi. There thus exists for Zhu a basic problem in the process of self-perfection, in that the mind must learn to control its own turbulence in order to manifest xing (ultimately) as its essential sage-like nature[12]. On the other hand, Zhu evades the problem and paradox already specified in Buddhism, whereby the turbulent mind somehow has to control the mind and find its ontological bearings from the operation of mind alone, by stressing that li is objectively as well as subjectively manifest: li can be known and understood through the natural world and more particularly through the accumulated wisdom of the Confucian dao, in a more direct and secure manner than that available through introspection and quietistic meditation. Zhu thus emphasises study and the investigation of things (zhizhi gewu: "the extension of knowledge through the investigation of things") as the primary means (in conjunction with jungzuo, sitting meditation) of disciplining the mind and manifesting the nature [13]. In this, he differs from his contemporary Lu Xiangshan who, in stressing the centrality of the mind alone rather than the investigation of things, remained caught for Zhu, like the Buddhists, in the endless snares of illusion. Although a dualist, Zhu thus remains a realist in comparison with the idealism of Lu's method.

In Zhu's eyes, the mind, for Buddhists, was marked in its fundamental nature as emptiness (wu), while for Confucians the mind contained, or could access, the basic, Heaven-conferred moral principles that governed social relationships:

> Take the human mind, for example. There is necessarily in it the Five Relations between father and son, ruler and minister, old and young, husband and wife, and friends. When the Buddhists are thorough in their action, they will show no affection in these relationships, whereas when we Confucianists are thoroughgoing in our action, there is affection between father and son, righteousness between ruler and minister, order between old and young, attention to their separate functions between husband and wife, and faithfulness between friends. Zhuzi daquan 60:14a Chan 1963:648

And countering the notion that, in Chan (Zen) meditation the practitioner is meant to arrive at a perception of xingli Zhu remarks

> As to your contention that in Chan, entering into meditation is to cut off thought and reveal xingli completely, this is especially wrong. When thinking is correct, there is xingli. In all operations and functioning, there is none which is not a revelation of xingli. Does it need to wait to have all thoughts cut off before xingli can be revealed? Furthermore, what is this that we call xingli? Are ren, yi, li and zhi not xingli? Are the five human relations between ruler and minister, between father and son, between old and young, between husband and wife, and between friends not xingli? If the Buddhists have really seen xingli, why should they violate and confuse (truth) like this, destroy everything, and darken and delude their original mind without realizing it themselves? Zhuzi daquan 60;31a-32a Chan 1963:652-3.

Already in this we can recognize some of the difficulties that Zhu encountered in formulating a theory of mind that might counter that put forward in Buddhism. Zhu wants to argue that in essence the mind is the moral mind (daoxin), possessed of the principles of Confucian morality rather

than empty as it is for Buddhists, though strictly speaking the mind cannot in essence be thus if xin is taken as an aspect of qi, rather than li. It is at a point such as this that Zhu argues for the complete interdependence of li and qi, though the argument is strained in comparison with the distinction he posits elsewhere. At one place Chen Chun views things thus:

> Generally, man receives the principle of Heaven and Earth to be his own body. Only when principle and material force are combined can there be mind. The mind is the master of the body because it possesses an unobstructed intelligent consciousness. This unobstructed intelligent consciousness issues from principle in some respects and from material force in others. They are different. Beixi ziyi 18; Chan 1986a: 56-7

Here the statement is clear enough that xin arises from the combination of li and qi; Chan also notes though, that there is a sense in which the (human) mind (renxin) is simply an aspect of qi, while the (moral) mind (daoxin) implies the interaction of li and qi. Speaking of the mind as a vessel which contains principle (li) and commenting on Shao Yong's imaging of xin as the outer city wall of xing, he remarks:

> the enclosure is the mind. Within the enclosure there is a great deal of human habitation, similar to the principles embodied in the mind. These embodied principles are one's nature, which means that what is embodied is the original substance of the mind. As principles are embodied in the mind, there is wonderful functioning in many ways. The consciousness that proceeds from principle (li) is the mind of ren, yi, li and zhi; it is the daoxin. If the consciousness proceeds from one's physical form and material force, that is renxin which is easily opposed to principle. Chan 1986a: 57

Chen uses here the categories of substance (ti) and function (yong) as a means of indicating the unity of xing

and xin; these categories served neo-Confucianism well, but it would seem that, if any function of qi involves some manifestation of li (to the extent that li and qi are always interdependent) then renxin must always already be a function of li, though in a different degree from daoxin. Yet this is something that Chen does not easily allow, and there remains also a permanent unsatisfactoriness in Zhu Xi's interlinking of xing and xin, as is evident in the following comment:

> Xing is comparable to taiji, and xin to yin and yang. Taiji exists only in yin and yang, and cannot be separated from thm. In the final analysis, however, taiji is taiji and yin and yang are yin and yang. So it is with xing and xin. They are one and yet two, two and yet one, so to speak. Zhuzi daquan 45 1a; Chan 1963:630

2. Zhu Xi's Reading of Ren.

(i) Confucian Universalism: Zhang Zai's Ximing (Western Inscription)

Cheng Yi's theory that "principle is one but its manifestations are many" served, as we have seen, to provide the unifying motif behind Zhu's metaphysic, letting him draw together in one system the diversity of physical social and ethical worlds; though the unity he achieved, must be read primarily in terms of its persuasiveness within the medieval climate context. While Zhu might have considered himself to be a universal rational metaphysic, the guiding metaphors by which he presents it, the elusiveness of the concept li, and the permanent tension between li and qi, all make of his achievement as much an

act of faith and rhetoric as of free rationality. The difficulty of acknowledging the power of his rhetoric - of acknowledging, for instance, that he had satisfactorily resolved the problem of the emergence and scope of physical disorder and moral corruption, rather than shifting the provenance of these to the remotest ground of his metaphysic, in the precariously uncertain ambivalence of taiji as li or qi - marks our separation from his vision. Yet for his contemporaries - despite an initial rejection of his work as "false learning" - his presentations had a profoundly salvific tone.

In part Zhu was able to draw here on the optimistic tenor found in Zhang Zai's Ximing, where a strong sense of world-security, of being deeply and properly a part of the universe and linked to all within it, served as the basis for Confucian commitment.

> Heaven is my father and Earth is my mother, and even such a small creature as I finds an intimate place in their midst.
> Therefore that which fills the universe I regard as my body and that which directs the universe I consider as my nature.
> All people are my brothers and sisters and all things are my companions. Chan 1963:497.

Here the universalism is somewhat akin to that of Averroes, insofar as the latter argues for the existence of a universal intellect, the common property of all mankind, a form transcending and grounding individual powers of intellection. But Zhuang's extension - followed by Zhu - is greater: all existents participate in a common resource of psychophysical energy, and participate also in a single diversifying principle and nature, xingli. This universal

linkage, drawing its inspiration particularly from Buddhist perceptions of the inter-linking of all existents, provides the basis from which ren as primary foundational virtue is now read. In its first theoretical sense, prior even to designating an individual capacity for virtue, ren, as a naming of xingli, is a principle of ontological goodness pervading all reality, a way of affirming the universe to be a generalised network of co-operative entities, an organism within which the power of conflict is contained.

Not that the containment was easily achieved: while the foundation of disorder is metaphysically remote, the ever-present possibility of disruption figured in the power of qi is existentially at hand, the more so since the pwerson as an individual psyche and social agent is constituted by qi: if xing marks an ontological sphere governed by li, xin, the individual heart-and-mind, is part of the consolidation of qi. Whether an individual's qi is harmonious, easily expressive of the goodness of li and malleable according to the standard Confucian categories of right conduct, or whether it is resistant and refractory, making of self-cultivation a hard-won victory, is determined by the apportionment of fate (tianming), and in exploration here of the range and types of human constitution and fortune Zhu makes no significant advance beyond the position already encountered in Dong Zhongshu and Wang Chong. Indeed, in terms of the different explanatory functions performed by li and qi it is

difficult to see how any advance could be made: qi in itself is a principle of randomness and immense ambivalent fertility, but to ascribe to li the originating power to control and shape it would be to rob li of its value as absolute goodness, ascribing to it instead the responsibility for unequal and "unjust" distributions of li. In the affirmed constant conjunctions of li and qi, li holds hierarchical priority as original goodness whereas qi seemingly has the capacity to subvert the hierarchy and manifest itself in clear or discordant formations, which it is then the "task" of li to organise and control.

All of this is to put the matter in a highly unsatisfactory way, but the problem lies in the categories with which Zhu has provided us. The difficulties can be further appreciated by reckoning how it is that the mind, as a manifestation of qi, is able to pass through the turbulence of its own constitution to perceive, and act in conformity with, li. Chan Buddhists acknowledged the paradox of using the mind to overcome the mind, but the same paradox holds for neo-Confucians given the deployment of the categories li and qi. While Zhu emphasises the importance of stilling the mind's turbulence, stilling qi in order to perceive li, he does not evade the problems either of how the mind might ever become motivated so to still itself, or of whether the mind stilled might not yet continue to function somewhat as Descartes' evil demon, a veil of illusion permanently obscuring and distorting the realm of li.

As I have said, the issues here will be picked up again below. We have seen how quick Zhu Xi is to characterise li in terms of the basic virtue of Confucianism, and thus to locate the structures of family and social order at the foundation of cosmic order itself. Zhang Zai follows the same notion in the Ximing, viewing all under Heaven as members of a single family (thus reminding us of the original etymology of tian as signifier for the body of the royal ancestors), and seeing members of the State as younger brothers of the emperor who is the oldest son of Heaven and Earth. Within the context of this universal family the sage is one whose love extends to all without limitations:

> The sage identifies his character with that of Heaven and earth, and the worthy is the most outstanding man. Even those who are tired, infirm, crippled, or sick; those who have no brothers or children, wives or husbands, are all my brothers who are in distress and have no one to turn to. Chan 1963: 497

The aspect of universal love here, which is perhaps now at its strongest point of affirmation within Confucianism, comes close to rendering null the particularity of any given family in its stress on the universal family of all under heaven. At this point we can see Mozi fully assimilated within Confucianism, though the kind of change manifest with Zhang Zai is a result not so much of Mozi's influence, as of the Buddhist doctrine of universal compassion exemplified in the figure of the bodhisattiva. Neo-Confucian responses to the stress on the bodhisattiva led to a renewed vision of the sage as world-redemptive

figure, with a stronger emphasis on the goal of sagehood as an individual perfection, and with an increase in the experience of tensioned anxiety also, insofar as the perceived distance between one's given endowment of qi and the perfect manifestation of li could be profoundly felt. [The tension here was particularly acute in that it was entirely an inner-worldly perfection to which neo-Confucians aspired. They did not subscribe to Buddhist belief in a series of rebirths, whereby the process of perfection could be carried through in a number of different incarnations. Nor did they believe in any form of afterlife which would incorporate a continuing process of perfection, a belief which, as we shall see, was central to the notion of perfection in caritas to which Aquinas subscribed].

(ii) Zhu Xi's Renshuo (Treatise on Ren)

Zhu situates ren foundationally within the given capacity of the psychophysical universe to function as a naturally productive system: the mind of Heaven and Earth is to produce things; man and things receive the mind of Heaven and Earth and are in turn productive. The original qualities of Heaven and Earth (characterised, in terms taken from the first hexagram of the Yijing, as origination, flourishing, bringing advantages, and firmness) are appropriated within the human mind as the four attributes of ren, yi, li and zhi; and just as origination is taken to sum up the other qualities of

Heaven and Earth, ren sums up the attributes of the mind.

Zhu identifies the four moral qualities of mind as substance (ti), in contrast with their manifest functioning (yong) as the feelings of love (ai) or compassion (ce), respect, being right and discrimination (shih-fei); just as ren is the foundational virtue incorporating all others, so love and compassion are the feelings which incorporate all others [14]. Here Zhu assimilates the position of Mencius, though with an interesting reversal. Mencius identifies feelings as the seeds of the heart, from which the virtues eventually grow. For later Confucianism, however, feelings became a highly unpredictable quantity, a point we have seen already manifesting itself with Dong Zhongshu. It is part of Zhu's argument for the essential goodness of xing to locate perfection and fulfilment in one sense at the origin, rather than as a later manifestation. The expression and manifestation of love and compassion is thus a showing of what is already originally given as ren. Here the process of perfection for Zhu has a cyclical quality, comparable to the cyclical movement of perfection that we shall note later with Aquinas: perfection lies in a return to the origin, it is a movement of anamnesis, of remembrance of what is, and will remain, man's essential nature at an ontological level.

In making ren the essential attribute of xing, Zhu argues also that it constitutes and summarises the Confucian dao. Here, while ren, in its active expression as love for

others, might be read in one sense simply as a principle of unity in human affairs, binding together differences and overcoming obstacles that might disrupt the flow of human relationships, its designation as a summary of the Confucian dao comes as a reminder that ren can only be adequately understood within the context of hierarchically graded relationships organised through the specific details of li (rituals). Thus, Zhu is anxious to avoid any concept of unity as an undifferentiated oneness or blurring of distinctions. He stresses rather that the proper respect of social distinctions is in fact given with xing insofar as li (which we would here read as an active capacity for and tendency topwards hierarchically ritualised behaviour) is an aspect of xing; and he carries li to the heart of ren itself insofar as he claims that li, together with the other virtues, is actively contained in ren.

CHAPTER 7

EROS AND THE STRUCTURE OF METAPHYSICS

1. The Voice of Eros

(i) Speech, Logos and Interiority

In China it is only with the advent of Buddhism that a philosophy of mind and a metaphysic based on on a reading of the mind - began to make its mark, and that a sense of inner space governed by an extensive discourse on mental life began to focus a radicalised thematic of immanence and transcendence. Under the pressure of Buddhist practice and disputation, Song neo-Confucians shifted from Xunzi's psychological behaviourism and Dong Zhongshu's cosmological speculation to a decidedly mentalistic reading of Confucian virtue (though for Zhu with the safeguards against Lu Xiangshan's crypto-Buddhism that we have already noticed). In the West the situation has been profoundly different. We can trace a strongly developing sense of mind, the emergence of an inner space of moral reflection, discourse with the gods, and apprehension of transcendent truth, in the shifting designations of roles and psyche from Homer to Plato. And in Plato's extended excursions into a realm governed by an idea of mind, and of the mind's capacity for being, truth and goodness we find the opening of a categorisation of the terrain of metaphysics - governed by a recurring set of rhetorical procedures and conceptual

polarities - that has held until a certain contemporary restructuring, if not dissolution, of the fictive space of subjectivity [1]. Thus Derrida marks the links between the mind and the voice, phone, privileged principle of interiority and guarantor of the mind's capacity for truth:

> The privilege of the phone does not depend upon a choice that could have been avoided. It responds to a moment of economy (let us say of the "life" of "history" or of "being as self-relationship"). The system of "hearing (understanding) oneself speak" through the phonic substance - which presents itself as the nonexterior, nonmundane, therefore nonempirical or noncontingent signifier - has necessarily dominated the history of the world during an entire epoch, and has even produced the idea of the world, the idea of world-origin, that arises from the difference between the worldly and the non-worldly, the outside and the inside, ideality and nonideality, universal and nonuniversal, transcendental and empirical, etc. Of Grammatology, p. 78.
>
> the essence of the phone would be immediately proximate to that which within "thought" or logos relates to "meaning", produces it, receives it, speaks it, "composes" it. If, for Aristotle, for example, "spoken words (ta en te phone) are the symbols of mental experience (pathemata tes psyches) and written words are the symbol of spoken words" (De interpretatione, 1, 16a, 3) it is because the voice, producer of the first symbols, has a relationship of essential and immediate proximity with the mind...The feelings of the mind, expressing things naturally, constitute a sort of universal language which can then efface itself. Ibid. p.11.[2]

There is, as we noticed in chapter one, a difficulty with some of Derrida's positions when he himself, as here, assumes the voice of Western universalism to characterise the situation in a non-Western domain (the significance of the voice "has necessarily dominated the history of the world during an entire epoch"). For our interests it is precisely the absence of the domination in the Chinese

context that is significant, since it entails that, when an inner mental world did become a matter of significance in China, the metaphors of the voice, of inner speech, of the interior word as a moment of transcendental truth, did not become deployed. (Nor, I think, were they in the Indian context which eventually opened the Chinese domain: while consideration of this is beyond our range here, we might note that the Indian concern with the power of the spoken and inner word was perhaps more linked to its incantatory qualities, its abilities to organise, control, and express the powers of mind in a battle against illusion, maya, than to its cognitive capacity to apprehend transcendental truth. Greek and Indian contrasts of truth and illusion are different. [3])

The Greek perception of the phone/logos as radical interiority is basic to Western ideas of human and divine freedom and creativity (the Judaic resource here will be dealt with in chapter 8). The inner voice as root and origin of the self, as resource for self-mastery through anamnesis and apprehension of the logos, the process of recollection as a return to the transcendent origin of inwardness in a communion through the phone/logos with the world of the Forms, and the rational Forms themselves as principles and exemplars of creativity - all of this marks the delineation of a space of inner freedom, and its contrast with the fallenness, contingency and instrumentality of the external and material: the body as

instrument of mind, world as expression of form, the inner and spiritual as free, and freely mastering, the weight of matter as constraining and potentially overwhelming. Within this the movement of the soul as the Plotinian "flight of the alone to the Alone" is but one inevitable expression of the distinction between immanent-transcendent psuche and matter [4].

The conceptual distinctions first formulated in the Greek period mark thus a crucial difference in the West as opposed to China. We have encountered more than once the notion of a continuity between Tian or taji and the world, rather than any idea of radical distinction. The emphasis on an immanent world foundational principle as part of an organic universe - together with the implicatons this carries for distinctions between the metaphysical and the physical, and spiritual and the psychological - is one instance of the ways in which Chinese philosophy handled foundational issues without passage through the transcendental theorisation of the inner voice. Without that theorisation - and with a vision of a universe shaped by immanent patterns (wen and li), rather than governed by objective laws established by Tian as transcendent lawgiver - certain issues (of self as separate from the world, of free will, of the conflict of good and evil), are not figured through the same kinds of polarity within a metaphysical schema as they are in the West. It is not, of course, the case that the original Greek separation of transcendental and material entailed a necessary theory of

absolute, free, divine creation: the issue is problematic in Plato, while Polotinus has a world-process governed by spiritual-intellectual (nous), rather than psychophysical (qi), emanation. The Platonic crystallisation of the inward phone/logos with an accompanying secondariness ascribed to materialist and writing, is however the crucial step in this direction. In China, by contrast, this polarity if there at all was oppositely perceived, with perhaps a greater privilege granted to writing over speech.

(ii) Voice and Writing: Egypt and China

> Since Egypt was blessed by having on earth a god as king, law proceeded from his mouth, always ritually renewed, and no codification was necessary or even proper. Wilson et al, 1954: 6.

It is not required of us to pursue the question of Plato's links with Egypt, and his possible reception in Heliopolis of Egyptian wisdom, in order to note a profound similarity between the voice/logos of the Memphite theology and that presented in Plato's own system: the move towards the Platonic position through the pre-Socratics is sufficient to make of the Egyptian thematic a point rather of profound congruence than seminal influence. At the same time it is not wise to abandon here, as does Derrida in reading Plato's myth of Thoth, a consideration of the genealogical in favour of the structural:

> One cannot, in fact, speak - and we don't really know what the word could mean here anyway - of a borrowing, that is, of an addition contingent and external to the text. Plato had to make his tale conform to structural laws. The most general of these, those that govern and articulate the oppositions speech/writing, life/death, father/son,

> master/servant, first/second, legitimate son/orphan-bastard, soul/body, inside/outside, good/evil, seriousness/play. day/night, sun/moon, etc also govern, and according to the same configurations, Egyptian, Babylonian and Assyrian mythology. Derrida, 1981: 85. [6]

What is crucial in this affirmation is not the broad distribution of structural laws but the assumption that they generally achieve "the same configurations"; since for Derrida part of that configuration is the hierarchical priority of the first term over the second (no structural relation being simple or innocent but always in conflict) the claim does again argue a universal priority of speech in relation to script.

By contrast, however, China always accorded script an originary and semi-sacred status (different from Western concepts of sacred scripture, or of the book of nature as God's script: writing here remains derivative, an external expression of a truth always originally present in its verbal simplicity within the mind of God). Writing "begins" in China with the script of divination, a public overt record that itself marks a public "written" divine communication: the messages from the ancestors in the Shang dynasty were communicated through the cracks appearing in ox scapula and turtle plastra consequent on the application of heat. The patterns thus released into the world through the power of fire were themselves an original communication as writing, to be recorded in that other writing which was the Chinese script proper [7]. Certainly the reading of the first writing required a

hermeneutic art; it required a trained priestly-scribal elite; and it required practices of preservation and transmission. What it did not require, and seemingly did not in any broad sense engender, was a theorisation of the individual xin/psuche as the privileged locus of hermeneutic experience. (The partial exceptions here would for instance be Mencius, and the Lu-Wang strand of neo-Confucianism.)

The idea of an overt, public pattern manifest in the operations of nature was variously expressed in Chinese thinking. The patterns of the stars gave to astronomy from early on a privileged status that made it a central element of Confucian craft. The geometric patterns of the Yijing served as a key to the process of the cosmos. When divine revelations occured in the Han dynasty they could take the form of mysterious written documents, as for instance the He Tu (River Chart) delivered by the river god. The emphasis on spontaneity in the practice of calligraphy was an attempt to catch the creative movement of qi as it gave birth to form, rather than to contemplate a divine truth and then express it graphically. The point could be developed further, but the examples are sufficient I think to indicate how the script remained primary, not so much revealing a transcendent truth behind reality as drawing attention to the shaping powers and patterns (wen and li) operative within the psychophysical universe. All of which is not to say that Chinese lacked the experience of internal monologue, of s'entendre parler; it is to note,

instead, that they did not develop, from that experience, a privileging of the voice and a radical bifurcation between transcendent and material worlds [8].

(iii) The Space of Psuche

It is the powerfully sensed awareness of such bifurcation that we find figured in the Platonic vision of the soul as locus of an erotic quest for truth and of congruence with others engaged in such a quest. At the same time the heritage of conflict and ambivalence associated with eros, from Homeric and pre-Socratic traditions, made it a theme to be handled carefully if it were ever to become a dynamic that might be well lived. An understanding of the space of psuche was thus crucial for Plato if the power of eros were to be harnessed and directed towards the good.

"Harnessing" is indeed an image that Plato himself provides in the Phaedrus. The Republic marks a threefold division within psuche: the logistikon is that aspect which calculates and reasons, the epithumetikon "that with which (the psuche) loves, hungers, thirsts and is stirred by other desires", and the thumoeides that spirited portion which is angered at injustice and desires righteousness. Reason, passion, desire, spirit, conscience, movement, deliberation, arbitration, and unpredictability are here all situated at one point or another within psuche. In the Phaedrus this tripartite soul becomes metaphorically figured, and it is clear that the distribution of powers is

hierarchically perceived. Psuche is likened to a charioteer and chariot drawn by two horses: the alliance between the charioteer (logistikon) and the noble horse (thumoeides) against the disruptive power of the other (epithumetikon) marks a profound division within psuche itself. At the same time the priority of the intellectual is affirmed as the given task of controlling the two other powers so as to achieve that vision of transcendent value which is the goal of psuche, and which is its sole purpose for undertaking its journey (cf Phaedrus 253c and following).

Plato here incorporates into psuche some attributes (of hindrance, disruption) which elsewhere he locates within the body, soma. Nonetheless, however we read the progression of the dialogues (we will consider soma further in relation to eros), the separation of soma and psuche, the priority of psuche over soma, the capacity of psuche to live an independent transcendent life beyond death, the immortality of psuche contrasted with the corruptibility of soma, the privileging of the intellectual, the intellectual destiny of the soul as vision of the Forms, the liability of the soul to rebirth and the capacity of the soul to choose its soma, the function of knowledge as recollection of truth originally known, the privilege of the philosopher as the ideal existent - all of this marks a central constellation of ideas within the Platonic corpus (though the way in which we might choose to read the mythic

formulation of certain of these themes is crucial) [9].

The death of Socrates - though not this alone -, the decision of the noblest democracy to put to death its noblest son, the issues raised by Socrates as to the very nature of nobility and the purchasing power of terms such as agathos, kakos and arete, provoked that pessimism evident in the Platonic text regarding the given forms of social life, and opened a vision of the burdensome weight of material existence in contrast to the light and splendour of the ideal Forms. It is towards the light, towards the transcendent sun as progenitor of original goodness, and away from the pale reflections cast on the walls of a cave - the passage out from the cave being a journey from the maternal womb to stand with pride before the gaze of the father, becoming thus transparent to the inmost recesses of one's psuche - that Plato moves; it is for this progression that he seeks to know psuche.

As early as the Phaedo psuche is identified as an eschatological principle: its immortality is tested in various ways, finally to be mythically affirmed.

> But there is a further point, gentlemen, said Socrates, which deserves your attention. If the soul is immortal, it demands our care not only for that part of time which we call life, but for all time. And indeed it would seem now that it will be extremely dangerous to neglect it. If death were a release from everything, it would be a boon for the wicked, because by dying they would be released not only from the body but also from their own wickedness together with the soul, but as it is, since the soul is clearly immortal, it can have no escape or security from evil except by becoming as good and wise as it possibly can. For it takes nothing with it to the next world except its education and training,

> and these, we are told, are of supreme importance in helping or harming the newly dead at the very beginning of his journey there.
> This is how the story goes. When any man dies, his own guardian spirit, which was given charge over him in his life, tries to bring him to a certain place where all must assemble, and from which after submitting their several cases to judgment, they must set out for the next world, under the guidance of one who has the office of escorting souls from this world to the other. When they have there undergone the necessary experiences and remained as long as is required, another guide brings them back again after many vast periods of time. Phaedo 107c-e.

At this stage psuche might appear as ground of radical individualism: certainly the individual figures here more profoundly than for Confucius, Mencius or Xunzi. Yet one crucial task in Plato's work is to overcome the prevailing competitive ethos that was the given basis of Athenian life. It is not that he sets the individual against the community, but that he aims so to deepen the understanding of the individual - to eliminate the sources of conflict and competition - that a community of virtue might prevail. Paradoxically, the individual becomes in this process a more profoundly singular entity, and conflict is resolved by the necessary elevation of the virtuous individual over the mass.

(iv) The Power of the Erotic

a. The Conflictual Element in Eros

If in its formative foundational text the Zhou erased the site of conflict in privileging Wen over Wu, the early Greeks through Homer acknowledge conflict as an integral element in, if not the very stuff of, cosmic and social life. The capture of Helen by Paris, the ten years' war

with its manifest texture of violence and blood-letting, the intimate engagement of divine forces in the war-arena, the foundation of the whole Homeric tale on love and death, violence and sexual passion, brings together themes of eros and conflict that will engage us henceforth. Nowhere is this conjunction more graphic than at the point where Paris, on the threshold of death at the hands of Menelaus, is spirited by Aphrodite from the scene of war to the scene of love, joined there by Helen:

> This time Menelaus with Athena's help has beaten me;
> another time I shall beat him. We have gods on our side also.
> Come, then, rather let us go to bed and turn to love-making.
> Never before as now has passion enmeshed my senses,
> (eros phrenas amphekalupsen)
> not when I took you the first time from Lakedaimon the lovely
> and caught you up and carried you away in seafaring vessels,
> and lay with you in the bed of love on the island of Kranae,
> not even then, as now, did I love you (hos seo nun eramai) and sweet desire seize me.
> Iliad 3, 439 - 446; Lattimore, 1969: 112.

If Homer presents us with a well-wrought tale, with a muthos that is logos through its epic form, with a conception of a totality that can be mapped and known - and the totality given over to repetition and return as in Levinas' reading of Odysseus [10] - and if the epic economy contains a concept of divine retributive justice - the dike of Zeus - so that the powers of life exist in a balanced competition, order resting finely on the brink of chaos, one violent excess calling forth its opposite, it remains nonetheless that this is a darkly energised text where any

economy is a scarcely founded theatre of force presided over by the gaze of Zeus. The original transgression of Paris is reduplicated in the scene above, and in that moment of utmost absolute excess where the intensity of passion rises from the proximity of annihilation, we approach a point of total expenditure of meaning and value. Here - throughout the text - Homer provides us with a recurring return of the repressed, a confrontation of the network of desire excluded in the founding of the social, a sense of its terror and delight - but in what way? How here do we choose to read the cathartic, as we pass through a narrative whose dramatic movement, and ultimate closure through the formulae of retribution, are known in advance?[11]

The distribution of conflict is constant throughout the rhetoric and structure of the text. Figures such as Agamemnon, Odysseus and Achilles are marked by their exorbitant masculinity and cunning, and it is this in the Iliad that constitutes a specific siting of the erotic, beyond those moments where _eros_ is manifest. [Empedocles later focussed this interlinking of the conflictual and erotic by structuring the cosmos through the two principles of _eros_ and _eris_ (strife).] The conflictual here - later making of the _agon_ (public competition) a founding metaphor for Greek life in Nietzsche's eyes [12] - became paradoxically the crowning value of culture, and served to usher in the particular form of homosexual desire as privileged _eros_ that marked classical Athenian practice

(the ethos of the Japanese samurai has in this a similar component)[13]. Just as with desire, so here also with the excess of bloodshed, with the close description of brutality and death - whether of sacrificial animals or humans - that we meet as part of the conflictual order, the question arises of the space of the cathartic, the containment and release achieved in recitation and writing [14].

The question was itself urgent for Plato: the banishment of poets from the Republic marks his wrestling with the forms of culture and paideia inherited from Homer and the tragedians, his attempted dissolution of the excess they figured. What he sought to project in an ideal state had already been achieved in China more than once by the time of Confucius, as we have noted: the reduction of the canon of the Shijing, just as the erasure of the memory of the Shang, left Confucius with a relatively homogeneous space for thematising a culture of co-operative virtue (even if the Zuozhuan preserves a record of violence and intrigue that matches the Homeric, it does not elevate this to a component of virtue as was the case with the articulation of arete). In a potentially self-defeating move, however, Plato sought to banish what was precisely the process of that deepening and opening of the space of psuche that he himself drew upon, a space that he wished to master and illuminate in a non-tragic way. It was the agony, not the pride, of conflict taken up by Aeschylus and Sophocles that

gave to their ethical visions a depth and intensity that Plato himself absorbed. Again, the contrast with Confucius is instructive. We have noticed the absence of ethical conflict, of ethical choice, as an issue in the Analects; choice, indeed, is not a philosophical problem for any pre-Han thinkers; and such horrendous consequences of mistaken choosing as those met by Oedipus do not darken the ethical horizon.To the same extent, the deployment of tragic experience as one route to an inner psychic space was not a Chinese option [15].

b. The Experience of the Tragic

Any intensive reading of Greek tragic forms now moves in the shadow of Nietzsche; his claim that Aeschylus and Sophocles (these were his two tragedians) achieved the tragic as a moment of deepest order out of darkest chaos, through confronting the Dionysiac wisdom of Silenus - "Ephemeral wretch, begotten by accident and toil,why do you force me to tell you what it would be your greatest boon not to hear? What would be best for you is quite beyond your reach: not to have been born, not to be, to be nothing. But the second best is to die soon." The Birth of Tragedy p.29 - is part of his larger claim that the best, the most luminous Apollonian aspects of the Greek world were spun from the play of Dionysus as a fictive life-enhancing vision: to be, with the utmost intensity, is achieved only at the sheer edge of darkness in the knowledge that beyond the edge lies nothing. If access to this knowledge is for Nietzsche the structural principle

governing vitality in any culture, thus making of The Birth of Tragedy as much a reading of the cultural state of contemporary Germany and the place of Wagner within it as an excursion into classicism - (the former being the only justifying criterion for any classicism), then the reasons for its disappearance, for the death of tragedy, are given also in the turn away from the Dionysiac and its containment in an economy of reason - the expulsion of the repressed from the stage of representation. For Nietzsche this occurs in the period after Sophocles, in the conjoint rationalism of Euripides and Socrates, in the privileging of the rational and discursive, even with tragedy, over against the abyssal as a therapeutic power.

If we turn thus to consider the placing of eros by Euripides we do so aware that the space of conflict is already changing, and that the change is crucial for how Plato came to understand psuche. Despite the strong working of fate in Aeschylus and Sophocles, both writers are profound visionaries of freedom, of the destructive or ennobling choices that become possible in straitened circumstances: under the excessive pressure of fate freedom figures as the ability to acknowledge and shape one's lot at the point of insight, rather than be carried haplessly by unknown forces. In Oedipus Tyrannus the force of blindness is reversed in the moment of insight: Oedipus switches from spiritual to physical blindness as he makes the transition from worldly to moral authority. His stance

here is whole and his vision single, choice being the essence of his person. [The distribution of knowledge and ignorance as the founding pivot of tragedy will be central also to Plato's reading of hamartia.]

In the Hippolytus Euripides focusses the impossibility of steady choice under the pressure of eros. From the outset Aphrodite presides over a scenario of desire and vacillation that dissolves the tragic into a process of deferral, or that reconstellates it around the impossibility of choice. Eros is presented as means to a necessary retribution, instrument of divine vengeance: Hippolytus has angered Aphrodite by his purist masculinity, his sublimation of desire in devotion to Artemis; affronted, Aphrodite chooses to strike Phaedra, his step-mother, with desire for him, using her as an expendable means to effect Hippolytus' downfall:

> Renowned shall Phaedra be in her death, but nonetheless
> die she must.
> Her suffering does not weigh in the scale so much
> that I should let my enemies go untouched
> escaping payment of that retribution
> that honour demands that I have.
> Hippolytus 46-50; Greene and Lattimore 1955:165.

In ignorance of Aphrodite's guiding intention the protagonists struggle to manage their lot. Hippolytus, narcissistic in his self-contained innocence, signing his innocence with a garland of flowers for his cruel mistress (71ff) - "The innocence of the flower religion, which is merely the self-less idea of self" Hegel, Phenomenology p.689; and Theseus' judgement on his own son: "Yes, in

self-worship you are certainly practiced" (l. 1080) - chooses to live within the bright orbit of the sun, rejecting Aphrodite's "nocturnal powers" nukti thaumastos (105), stepping back thus from the brink of tragic vision (and we would need to know how Plato faces the sun without the night's vengeance) [16]. But Phaedra too would of her own have chosen light ["It would always be my choice/to have my virtues known and honoured (402-3)...Time holds a mirror, as for a young girl/ and sometimes as occasion falls, he shows us/ the ugly rogues of the world. I would not wish/that I should be seen among them" (427 - 30)]. This preference for the light (characterised later by Diotima in the Symposium as the desire for immortality through the glory of a good name) becomes, in the pragmatic rationalism of the nurse, advice to retain passion in secret, rather than opt for the conjunction of passion and death favoured by Phaedra ["how many erring sons have fathers helped/ with secret loves? It is the wise man's part/ to leave in darkness everything that is ugly." (464-6)]. While the nurse acknowledges the power of love, the cloak of darkness with which she would veil it (and the logos with which she would defer death), serves as a cipher for worldly rather than tragic wisdom, a prudential stance posited as superior to Phaedra's "noble-sounding moral sentiments" (l.501).

Her advice to Phaedra complete, the nurse fulfils it with the offer of a love potion: the ambivalence of this pharmakon (poison or cure, 516) marks the systematic

ambiguity of rational logos as healing or destructive power throughout the play as a whole.

It is the nurse's logos, its inability to match the power of eros, that initiates Phaedra's downfall: failing to foresee that Hippolytus could not hear of Phaedras' passion without disgust, as equally that Phaedra could not live with the shame evoked by Hippolytus' response, even though he had pledged himself to secrecy ["Had you not caught me off my guard and bound/ my lips with an oath, by heaven I would not refrain from telling this to my father" (657f)] the nurse provokes the death that Phaedra had earlier sought but postponed. The space of that earlier deferral, though, becomes in turn the space for Hippolytus' downfall; now in order to subvert the shame that Hippolytus through speech could bring to her, Phaedra leaves a death-note branding him as her seducer: corpse and writing thus become the signs designating Hippolytus, ciphers for that living corpse he has already become in renouncing the life-force of Aphrodite.

Through Phaedra's death and its message the narcissistic closure of Hippolytus, the virginal maiden soul (parthenon psuchen echon, 1006) that identifies itself with the hard feminine and appropriates that as a male preserve whilst consigning the female generally to the sphere of defilement, is breached in a writing that sets light against light, Phaedra's need against Hippolytus', and that marks the rupture of ideal self-presence through the force

of exteriority, a detour and death for each.

2. The Dialectic of Eros in the Symposium.

> Love distills desire upon the eyes,
> love brings bewitching grace into the heart
> of those he would destroy.
> I pray that love may never come to me
> with murderous intent,
> in rhythms measureless and wild.
> Not fire nor storm have stronger bolts
> than those of Aphrodite sent
> by the hand of Eros, Zeus' child.
> Hippolytus 525 ff.

(i) A Reading of the Text.

We might note here, for consideration again below, the possible proximity of Hippolytus-as-type to the Platonic psuche. In the Symposium the eros that Plato seeks to know, that is the force behind his knowing, is an aspect of the masculine psuche caught within the closure of its own self-reflection, wide-ranging though that may be. Indeed, in its formal mise-en-scene the dialogue makes the point: through the power of anamnesis the philosopher retrieves events from twenty years prior, dealing with the foundational elements of culture and cosmos, which were themselves a form of anamnesis, and he stands thus within the theatre of memory as spectator of his own and his culture's genesis, identifying the shifting designations of eros in a phenomenology of the mind's progress towards truth[17].

The Symposium records a dinner party where speeches are delivered in praise of eros (and in identification: it is

precisely because the identity of eros shifts that I do not use any personification here, despite the fact that for a good part of the proceedings eros is a god). The form of the conversations is governed by the movement of dialectic as Plato takes stock of the received wisdom on eros, modifying and nuancing the understanding of eros as he proceeds, and transforming eros into the most powerful aspect of psuche in its passage to transcendence. The outline of that passage here, though, is developed in terms of its world-immanent features rather than in its conclusion as eschatologically triumphant vision.

The gist of Diotima's speech is to identify a movement of transcendence from physical to spiritual eroticism; the relationship between Socrates and Alicibiades reinforces this point, though in a complex manner. But whatever the final status of the physical in the dialogue, the general tenor and force of male homosexual desire is preserved as a norm both in the idealising of the inter-male relationship - explicitly in the speeches; and formally in the dialogue's structure as a conversation between, and in the presence of, men (the woman flautist is dismissed at the beginning, 176 e) -, in the functions ascribed to the two female figures exemplifying or representing aspects of eros (Alcestis and Diotima), and in the identification of philosophy as an expression of male desire springing from the structure of eros within a given cultural economy [18] [as part of that consider, for instance, the conjunctions

of women, eros, madness, darkness and death in Euripides in general and compare these with the opposite conjunctions Plato insists upon: men, eros, reason, light, immortality]. Through the tension of the dialectic - Socrates acknowledges its competitive element - the agon in Greek life is preserved under the form of a shared struggle towards the good.

a. Phaedrus

Phaedrus begins by repeating the oldest wisdom on eros: it is a power unbegotten, progenitor of the gods. In his speech the cosmic, political and ethical dimensions of eros are adumbrated: this is the lowest stage of the dialogue's progress, but we have here the first seeds of truth that will flower in the words of Diotima. We have also a first problem, of how to read the examples Phaedrus offers. There is for instance the question of Phaedrus' own perspective: as the beloved of Eryximachus, who delivers the third speech, he is the passive partner in a love relationship: how then does he focus the different balencies of eros in relation to the lover (erastes) and the beloved (eromenos)? Renowned for his beauty, Phaedrus also serves as as the occasion for lovers to give birth to works of love they carry within them, according to the sense in which Diotima later speaks of eros as giving birth to virtue on to kalon (beauty). To what extent in praising eros does Phaedrus praise himself as eromenon, and in what way?

Within the ethical domain, he offers Alcestis as his first example: her self-sacrifical eros, exchanging her life for the life of her husband, is presented as one of the high points of eros in the Greek heritage. If, in consequence of a Christian tradition of self-sacrifice, this seems now to move straight to the essence of love - exemplifying also for Phaedrus the centrality of courage to any vision of excellence - we will see that Plato construes things differently, insisting on the self-interested nature of eros [20]. Also this sole citing here of a woman as exemplar of love should give us pause, constituting a gesture that is at no later point in the dialogue fulfilled through an adequate statement of feminine eros and feminine virtue [21]. And we should observe furthermore a complex switching of roles: Phaedrus, the female to Eryximachus' male, praises a woman; the woman praised, however, takes the male role of active eros; that role is in turn subverted by the pusillanimity of the man for whom she dies, so that her eros can hardly be said to lead to great virtue; and the glory of her death is further reduced by the fact that the gods bring her back to life.

Orpheus is introduced next as an instance of the failure of eros: he is a lukewarm lover condemned by the gods to meet his death at the hands of women, and his fate as a singer is a fate to which Plato would also consign eros as lyric enthusiasm. Achilles, by contrast, is the power and courage of the beloved personified: he gives his life in avenging the honour of his lover Patroclus. Yet is his act

inspired by eros or gratitude? Nowhere in the dialogue does the notion of eros as reciprocal love get established, though it is raised as an issue in Aristophanes' speech (covered by the term philia, which is not here a central term) [22]. In praising the virtue of the beloved Phaedrus in fact seems not to praise eros, but rather to introduce a claim about an order of virtue other than, and superior to, that founded by eros, an order of virtue as gratitude. Would we be right to remember here all that Nietzsche says on gratitude as an exemplification of a slave morality (is not anyone in the moment of gratitude in the position of the slave)? Yet Nietzsche would hardly want gratitude insinuated in Greek morality, the form of heroic assertive morality, prime instance of the will to power. But Phaedrus does elevate Achilles' devotion to Patroclus over eros - not directly, since he claims that the active force of eros is nearer to the gods - but indirectly, by having the gods give Achilles the reward of immortality for "they are even more amazed, delighted and beneficent when the beloved shows such devotion to his lover, than when the lover does the same for his beloved." [We should note that throughout Plato incorporates the assumption that the older man is the lover, drawn by the beauty, to kalon, of adolescent youth - Phaedrus stresses that Achilles is "still beardless", and far younger than Patroclus. The idealisation of youth here, a quintessential hallmark of the classical Greek world, is at a signal remove from the Confucian reverence for age, though physical grace, as we

have noted, is a recurring motif in the Shijing. For Plato the beauty of youth is a cipher for immortal beauty, the beauty of the Forms.] Finally we might note, in qualification of our comment on reciprocity, that Phaedrus does stress the devotion of Achilles; we will need to assess the force of this notion later.

How much of the substance of his presentation does Phaedrus grasp reflexively, in the range of its implications? Plato focusses the power of eros to achieve its goals despite a man's ignorance of them, with awareness only coming later in the process of anamnesis. Phaedrus indirectly here broaches the issue of a dual eros, both in his opening quotations from Hesiod, and in his view that the gods reward the power of eros (Alcestis) and of devotion (Achilles). Firstly, then, we can ask, Does eros belong with the other elements of the cosmos, the Ouranian forces, or with the more recently-born Olympians? How does it relate to these two cosmic orders once in conflict, and to the political orders derived from them? Phaedrus offers a partial quotation from Hesiod, and in so doing makes eros part of the Ouranian order, excluding the Olympians (the section in parenthesis is missed by Phaedrus):

> Chaos was first of all, but next appeared
> Broad-bosomed Earth, sure standing-place for all
> [the gods who live on snowy Olympus' peak,
> And misty Tartarus, in a recess
> Of broad-pathed earth,] and Love most beautiful
> Of all the deathless gods
> [Eros, hos kallistos en athanatoisin theoisin]
> Theognis 116 - 120; Wender 1973:27

We can, I think, take it - this would be confirmed by the

way Pausanias takes his cue from Phaedrus - that the full text of Hesiod was known to the audience, and that Phaedrus thus opens, directly or indirectly, a consideration of the role of eros in sustaining political order. Yet in his speech he seems, in different ways, to favour both cosmic orders: the Ouranians are granted a priority in that eros is linked with them (and thus as we shall see with a naturalistic science that does not require the Olympians as explanatory principles), but the Olympians are also granted the power to award outstanding devotion. The nature and status of eros are quite insecure at this point [23].

b. Pausanias

Pausanias stresses this insecurity by developing the theme of the two forms of eros, speaking of the heavenly, Ouranian, and earthly-Olympian, Pandemon, and noting that any praise of eros must establish to which it is addressed; he thus raises a question of definition that will be more to the fore later. Earthly love is that evidence by the vulgar masses (hou hoi phauloi ton anthropon erosin 1816), is an entirely fortuitous, tuchei, principle which draws men to women instead of to boys, paidon, is based on the flesh, and has no orientation to virtue. Heavenly love "springs from a goddess whose attributes have nothing of the female but are altogether male" (all' arrenos monon, 181c) and, in turning towards men, moves there towards the intellectual, ideally leading the older lover into faithful companionship with his beloved.

Several points of interest already emerge at the opening of Pausanias' speech. Firstly, he raises the question of chance, tuche. The play of fortune constitutes one of the founding themes for tragedy: how to live a morally worthwhile life when, by accident or necessity, one commits wrong and remains responsible for its consequences. Oedipus marries Jocasta out of blindness, through chance; Agamemnon sacrifices Iphigineia as a necessary step to resolve the conflict of Olympian powers. The world governed by the Olympians was one where the conflict of those powers themselves, in their impress on the human arena, made self-cultivation, the attainment of arete, a precarious affair. Plato objected to the portrayal of conflict and of base passion in tragedy, considering it to lessen the chances of moral constancy; by the same token he objected to the divided cosmos of the Olympians. Pausanias here reduces Olympian eros in favour of Ouranian. Olympian (Pandemon) eros is marked by tuche, which in turn is linked with women; constant eros is linked with men. Plato wants to remove the element of chance in human affairs, eliminating the tragic inherent in the flux of diverse circumstances and moving towards the constancy of the forms and the intellectual element in man [24].

The reduction of woman in her link here with chance is not as direct as it might at first appear. Dover notes that the Greeks recognised different forms of male sexual desire and practice as appropriate to different stages of a

man's life. A young man will be drawn to women, but it is a hazardous affair to find himself a partner. An older man will be drawn to young men, and established conventions make the likelihood of satisfaction high. This latter appears to Plato to be a more rational arrangement, reducing tuche or eliminating it from the erotic quest. The rational element is also prized by the older man in his choice of a boy as partner: Plato, through Pausanias, focusses on the intellectual aspect of psuche, dismissing from account, or reducing to a minimum, physical and emotional factors. [The reduction of the female is achieved here by characterising the true goddess of eros as male].

A second point concerns Pausanias' stress on constancy: the lover will be prepared to spend his whole time with his beloved, sharing his life with him (181d). We can ask here whether constancy amounts to, or involves, reciprocity, a recognition of the individual as lovable in his own right. In Diotima's speech the individual as a focus of love seems to fade in relation to the need of the lover to give birth to his own virtue through the medium of the beloved: Diotimas' eroticism seems to be supremely narcissistic, rather than other-directed. Vlastos raises some of the issues here:

> We are to love persons so far, and only insofar, as they are good and beautiful. Now since all too few human beings are masterworks of excellence, and not even the best of those we have the chance to love are wholly free of streaks of the ugly, the mean, the commonplace, the ridiculous, if our love for them is to be only for their virtue and beauty, the

> individual, in the uniqueness and integrity of her individuality, will never be the object of our love. This seems to me the cardinal flaw in Plato's theory. It does not provide for love of whole persons, but only for love of that abstract version of persons which consists of the complex of their best qualities.
>
> Vlastos, 1973: 31.

We will take up the qualities of beauty again, since it is a specifically Greek appreciation that Plato inserts into his theory. Insofar as the status of the individual in Pausanias' speech is concerned, it would seem that the issue cannot be decided: the constancy of the lover is perfectly compatible with his appreciation the beloved simply as a continuing occasion of his own progress in virtue. To put it thus sounds strange to us no doubt, and a major difficulty lies in fixing the degree of estrangement between Plato and ourselves. Plato is talking about passion, not friendship (though his theory of friendship remains, if not narcissistic, profoundly self-interested). Passion, whatever else, surely incorporates that thrill of delight occasioned by, and only by, a singular individual. Pausanias acknowledges such passion, <u>eros</u>, as leading to constancy. Do we assume that within constancy the other fades as we become aware again - this sense having been lost at the point of passion's intensity - of the centrality to us of our own pursuit of virtue, our own self fulfilment in the attainment of fame and glory? How do the motivational and the moral orders relate here - is the motivation of eros itself something moral, or is it only open to moral scrutiny in terms of the fruits it bears? And how does the press of emotion and

desire relate to intellect: in speaking of an attraction to the intellectual element is Pausanias still not leaving us with narcissism, with the intellect in search of itself as mirrored in the other? We will attempt some resolution of these issues as our reading proceeds.

Finally we might note, a third point, that Pausaias as the lover of Agathon, is as likely as Phaedrus to betray self-interest in his characterisation of eros as active force, praising the virtue of the lover over the beloved. We should be alert, then, to a degree of special pleading in his presentation.

Pausanias soon complicates his presentation by focussing on the beauty of youth as a cipher of unpredictability: who knows how the beautiful young will turn out, and whether love for them will be any more than spent passion, a fruitless climax of desire; to prevent such waste "there should be a law to forbid the loving of mere boys" 181e. But who is such a law to protect? - it seems to constitute a device preventing the man of substance from wasting himself, rather than an instrument for protecting youth, but then it is claimed that the man of substance is already a law unto himself (181e 3-4). Since he stands above, and does not need, law it is suggested that law exists to regulate the behaviour of the earthly lover, who needs some external constraints. This then serves to introduce a discourse on law where the question of waste is abandoned in favour of a reading of law as protection of the good

name of eros. Here the superiority of the Athenian law code, in the complex privilege it grants to the status of the (true) lover, serves as a confirmation of Pausanias' own active nature as erastes. At the same time the Athenian code guards against the beloved yielding to his lover before the lover's virtue is known. For Pausanias, then, the code serves to confine eros within the rule of virtue (in this the nature of eros becomes ambivalent: the distinction between immoral and moral eros, insofar as these terms characterise the nature of eros is shifted; eros is now characterised as neutral, (oute kalon einai auto kath'hauto oute aischron 183d, 4-5), its value only being detained by consideration of the acts resulting from eros insofar as these are evaluated within a particular moral economy. Law here is thus external to eros, a supplement to guide and direct it; law is an addition to a neutral natural order; heavenly eros/Aphrodite is outside the moral domain.

c. Eryximachus

The separation of natural force and moral containment, an ambivalent point with Pausanias, is picked up by Eryximachus, a doctor who offers a physicalist account of eros that conspires with the naturalist presuppositions of Phaedrus, and who, in that account, stresses the distribution of eros as cosmic energy: the influence of eros is evident throughout every activity whether sacred or profane (kat' anthropina kai kata theia pragmata 186bz). From a medical viewpoint Eryximachus distinguishes two

sorts of desire, that manifest by a sick and that by a healthy body. Given the high concentration of medical knowledge and practice in classical Athens, we can take it that Eryximachus draws upon the experimental style of a well-established position. More to the point here, he raises a materialist challenge whose resolution by Diotima can be seriously questioned. If one recognises the implication of desire in the texture and tissue of the body, is it ever possible to speak of that purely intellectual vision which Diotima proffers as the culminating fruit of desire? In some sense such a vision is always a function of a bodily state,and implicates such if it is to be achieved, but the reading of the body can be varied. Do we for instance accpet epilepsy, with Dostoyevsky's prince Myshkin, as the privileged moment whereby the solidity of material existence is breached and a spiritual world seen? Do we encourage the frenzy of madness as a shamanistic moment of excess in which the divine finds us worthy recipients of visitation? Do we seek physical mutilation as a way of checking the body and releasing the force of spritual <u>eros</u>? (These questions can also be read in relation to later gnostic handling of Plato). Even if one opens a discussion of desire in relation to health and sickness, it is in no manner self-evident how one should evaluate the nature, let alone the significance, of health, even though Eryximachus and Diotima in their different way each presume self-evidence [25].

By undercutting a distinction between sacred and profane Eryximachus claims that eros is open to the empirical inspection of natural science; his dualism of health-sickness is an empirical, not theological or transcendental one. Medical science has as its aim to overcome conflicting desires as these are encountered in the body; its aim here is also to replace some desires with others, as seems necessary:

> And if he (the physician) can replace one desire with another, and produce the requisite desire when it is absent, or, if necessary, remove it when it is present, then we shall regard him as an expert practitioner. 186d 2-5.

In explicating Aristophanes' speech Nussbaum quotes from Brandt on the possibility of replacing a love that has been lost:

> If a person is disappointed in love, it is possible to adopt a vigorous plan of action which carries a good chance of acquainting him with someone else he likes at least as well.

The question of the replacement of one object of desire with another, in an ascending hierarchy, is central to Diotima's account of the ascent of <u>eros</u>; her therapeutic art is akin to the art of the physician. But the question of replacement again touches on the status of the individual. We desire persons or objects because of their individual appeal to us, either wholly as an individual or in terms of some individualising feature; precisely as individuals, persons or things seem irreplaceable. Yet we will need to bear in mind whether, for Diotima, love of individuals or for certain individuals, is not some kind of

addiction, a lack of health. And if certain love-objects must be replaced by others, if this replacement is a necessary change from sickness to health, what status do individuals as such have in the final visionary scheme?

The physician seeks harmony within the body; eros is that which brings about harmony, in the body and in any other sphere; any art, insofar as aimed at producing a harmonious growth and development, is under the direction of eros. Within the sphere of human activities Ouranian eros is the principle of harmony, while earthly love, the Muse of many songs, is the principle of chaos. Here the physician would have us abandon the Olympian dispensation, with its inevitable burden of conflict, and its tragic vision, and its religious practices as a healing resource, in favour of that oldest order of Nature which operates without conflict and in a rational manner. [Although Eryximachus speaks of a diviner's art in relation to both forms of eros 188c, it seems clear that the need for divinatory understanding of Ourian eros would be obviated if Olympian eros did not exist; not only is the latter many-tongued, and so internally in conflict, it also conflicts systematically with the former eros. Under Ourian eros opposites would be in harmony, not in conflict, and the order of the world would be transparent to reason.]

d. Aristophanes

Aristophanes moves to undercut Eryximachus' secular

rationalism by claiming eros as the highest divinity: if this were generally recognised, he would be accorded supreme religious honours, 189c. Aristophanes offers us a cosmic fable in order to explicate eros; the purpose of the fable is to establish the real nature of man (dei de proton humas mathein ten anthropinen phusin 189d 5), and the shift here is twofold, to the specifically human sphere, and to a new stage in the process of definition: the dialogue is manifesting in its structure that movement of eros as progressive ascent towards to kalon that will later become the point of thematic explication with Diotima.

The fable focusses the primal wholeness of the human race. Just as Nietzsche offered us the fable of the clever beasts, taking an estra-terrestrial standpoint in order to view the pathos of the human condition, so Aristophanes invites us to see ourselves from outside as utterly strange, and through the force of that strangeness to come to a sharper understanding of eros. The fable speaks of three original forms of erotic self-sufficiency: one male, one female, one hermaphrodite. Each original creature was cylindrical in shape,

> with rounded back and sides, four arms and four legs, and two faces, both the same, on a cylindrical neck, and one head, with one face one side and one the other, and four ears, and two lots of privates, and all the other parts to match. They walked erect, as we do ourselves, backward or forward, whichever they pleased, but when they broke into a run they simply stuck their legs straight out and went whirling round and round like a clown turning cartwheels.189e - 190a.

The original self-sufficiency of the three sexes was ruptured by Zeus when they tried to scale heaven: as

punishment for their hubris they were split in half, their desire for heaven thus deflected into a desire to find and unite with their missing part. Eros is now the desire to re-establish an original self-sufficiency; and the 3 forms of sexual desire - man for man (the highest, just as the original all-male sex was the highest, descended from the sun 190b, 192a) woman for woman, and men and women for each other - represent the three forms of the search for wholeness [27].

The characterisation of the human thus as permanently wounded in its flesh, a deformed half of its original self, consigned always to a search for fusion with a singular other as the only source of healing, raises an important network of questions in our interpretation of eros. Here, more than anywhere else apart from in the speech of Alcibiades, the significance of the individual that Vlastos reckoned to be excluded from Platonic eros is given a place; paradoxically, though, that place marks also a certain death of the individual in the encounter with the otheer, insofar as this would constitute a moment of absorption. Not just a moment, either, insofar as this might be our current experience in an ecstatic sharing of flesh and spirit: the dynamism of eros that Aristophanes focusses is towards a permanent fusion, or re-fusion, an impossible permanent commingling of flesh through re-absorption in an original oneness. [Where psuche figures in this is not apparent: Aristophanes does not

mention whether, with our divided bodies we also have divided souls.]

The degree of chance in the erotic quest is sharply focussed by Aristophanes: of all the different persons we might encounter in life, only one figures as the missing half that will make us whole. Not here Brandt's argument that one love might eventually be replaced by another. On the other hand, the stress on singularity focusses not only the chance element that Plato seeks to overcome, but also the absurdity of investing so much in the uniqueness of one other person. This is not indeed the recognition of the other as valuable in his or her own right, but merely as an extension of self, with a form of narcissism that seeks not the mirror but the missing half. Precisely because it is just one missing half, all the other individuals one might meet in life are rendered relatively insignificant [28].

The state of ultimate fusion that Aristophanes projects serves also to focus whether it is in fact fusion that is desired, or that thrill of <u>eros</u> that draws us to it. Although the fable of original self-sufficiency focusses the whole (bipartite) individual as active, this has a distancing effect from any ordinary experience of the fusion of intimacy as a passive, self-contained moment that entails activity again once fusion and the transport of ecstasy has passed. At the heart of <u>eros</u> is the real desire for desire, or for the suspension of desire in communion?

Here it is not clear also whether Aristophanes would in fact reckon eros to be absent in the state of oneness. His fable has the original creatures attempting to scale heaven in an act of hubris: should we not see that act as motivated by some eros, some desire to be like, or to overthrow, the gods? And if now there is desire an original self-sufficiency, is there not also, within that desire, the capacity for an uninhibited will to power at present circumscribed by the gods?

Finally, we might note that Aristophanes himself appears clear about the prior claims of fusion over anything else, admitting the readiness to be merged into an utter oneness with the beloved. Considering whether lovers, in their oneness, would choose to be welded together by Hephaestus if given the choice, Aristophanes suggests there is nothing they would like better. This introduction of an external divine agency as instrument for the permanent completion of eros parallels Socrates introduction of Diotima as final purveyor of the truth of eros. [The metal working god was pre-figured in the comparison of individuals with two halves of the same coin, each looking for the opposite half that tallies, 191d. Without welding, persons form a broken currency, any place in an economy of exchange ruptured until we have found completeness.]

e. Agathon.

In considering the nature of the person Aristophanes wanders from the question of generativity (though he does

point out that the gods introduced the possibility of sex and procreation in order to prevent the divided monads from dying out 191 b-c]. Yet the theme of generativity is one we have already referred to, acknowledging that for Plato it is an issue to be secured in the final exposition of eros. In the search for the missing other Aristophanes privileges reintegration at the expense of generation [29]. To what extent he focusses here Plato's assessment of established tragic and comic art, in relation to the new art of philosophical dialectic, is a question we cannot consider in all its implications. But we should note that Plato privileges the literary form of the dialogue as precisely that means capable of giving birth to truth through an ordered progression of argument and inquiry. From Plato's viewpoint received tragic and comic art can be seen as those forms of art which reintegrate us in the given order and flux of society, rather than as forms now capable of giving birth to the new order of philosophy.

That much said, it is nonetheless the possibility of generativity through the eros of the poet that Agathon focusses. But the possibility comes also with a warning. The Symposium is set the day after Agathon won first prize with the performance of one of his tragedies. Before he speaks now Socrates reminds us how he "took the stage with the actors the other day" 194b; it is as if Socrates warns us that the words of the poet belong only with the mimesis of the actor, that they are a kind of performance or

representation of another truth that is never known as truth but rather apprehended as doxa (opinion) or expressed through the ravishment of poetic intoxication. The eros that Plato will finally give us is the eros of knowledge.

If Aristophanes gave us the nature of man, Agathon would give us the nature of the god eros 195a - thus the movement. Reversing the earlier priority of the Ouranians within which eros (or true eros) existed as part of the oldest order of reality, Agathon considers eros the youngest of the gods, (neotaton auton einai theon kai aei neon 195c) the enemy of age (195b) - here the young eromenos Agathon praises the youth of love. And love's imperishable youth prepares us for the unchanging constancy of the Forms.

The record of violence amongst the gods evident in Hesiod and Parmenides is the work of necessity (ananke) not eros; eros is a co-operative principle, a principle of harmony. By implication eros is also to do with freedom, in contrast with the compulsion and constraint of ananke. [The readiness to speak thus of eros is rooted in Agathon's status of eromenos: he does not speak here out of the urgent experiences of the erastes.] Eros is characterised in a generally feminine manner; delicate, settling in the softest of men's hearts, tender and supple (95d - 196a), belonging to the gentlest order of nature, to the religion of flowers separate from the world of conflict ("where the ground is thick with flowers and the air with scent, there

he will settle" 196b 2-3).

So far as the moral excellence of eros is concerned, this is exemplified in righteousness, temperance, courage and in the genius of artistic inspiration and creativity (196b-e). The creativity of _eros_ both brings everything to life, and is the guarantee of fame for the brightest works of creation. Here the thrill of poetic speech does not distinguish for us between bringing to life in general, and bringing to life only what is excellent and beautiful. Is _eros_ the life force generally - in which case how do we account for the presence of ugliness (_to aischron_), the more so since love's orientation towards _to kalon_ is stressed (197b)? Or is love, as the youngest of the gods, consigned to manifesting itself in a field already governed by the force of _ananke_. And is _ananke_ here some alternative life-force, marking the world consigned to a play of conflictual repetition? If love is a secondary principle does it constitute a kind of supplementary creation, a healing and making whole of a original but now fallen creation? And was the original creation ever whole, or was it not from its inception governed by conflict? If so does this set a permanent limitation on the work of eros, letting it create a fragile world of beauty and friendship - such as that evident in the shared conversation of the _Symposium_ itself (197d) - only against a necessary and inescapable backdrop of duress and violence? And - granting a priority to ananke - is _eros_, as the richest ornament of heaven and earth (197e),

anything other than mere decoration, superfluity, the excess of aestheticism - offered to a privileged few who rely on the toil of others, the surplus-value of democracy arising from an investment in slave-labour as the field of ananke?

f. Socrates

Socrates makes his entrance by distancing himself from the rhetoric of the previous speeches, distinguishing the adornment of style from the pursuit of truth, and suggesting that, like Hippolytus, he agreed to involve himself in the discussion in word only, not intention, 199a5. Speaking nonetheless, he claims that it is now the truth he will offer us. Acknowledging the rightful centrality accorded by Agathon to questions of the nature of eros (hopoios tis estin ho eros, 199c5), Socrates first seeks to know whether eros is directed towards something or nothing (ho eros eros estin oudenos e tinos 199e 6-7). The question of intentionality is crucial for what follows: in establishing that eros always has some object, however vaguely apprhended, Socrates shifts the question of generativity into a broader frame (Agathon, though raising the issue, still had a monadic sense of the poet giving birth to works from within his own psuche). Understanding "nothing" as total indeterminateness - rejecting its link with eros - Socrates suggests that eros is directed towards what is perceived as a lack; that lack becomes known through the presence of beauty, to kalon, and insofar as to kalon is the object of eros, eros itself cannot be

characerised as kalon - a first correction of Agathon's position. Lack is thus an emptiness in eros - in the desiring agent - that seeks its fulness in Kalon [eros as dynamic emptiness bears valuable comparison with the wu of Zhuangzi and Chan]. The notion of lack here is continuous so far with the claims of Aristophanes.

To pursue his formulation of love Socrates introduces his discourse with Diotima [the dialogue thus in its structure intensifying the movement of anamnesis, situating memory within memory]. Diotima identifies eros as neither beautiful nor ugly, but as midway between these two extremes, 202a-b. Situated thus in the in-between, the metaxu, eros is also figured as neither human nor divine but rather as a very powerful spirit, thus defining a space between transcendent origin and goal (and thus, though distinguished from the human, standing also for the best in the human: for psuche that lies between heaven and earth, moving from origin to goal in the process of birth and rebirth). Love is the great hermeneut, drawing the human towards an understanding of the divine. The man informed by eros has a spiritual power (daimonios aner 203a5), in contrast with the technical skill and knowledge possessed by others (e peri technos e cheirourgias tinas banausos 203a 6-7). Here - although the spiritual skills associated with eros are at this point characterised as prophetic and priestly crafts 202e 7-8 - Plato begins that overturning of the empirical scientific knowledge favoured by Eryximachus:

such knowledge is consigned to doxa, the non-rigorous organisation of apparent fact, in contrast with the foundational knowledge of ultimate structures that eros brings through the vision of the Forms. Thus begins the move to retain and incorporate empirical science within a metaphysical ontology that will have a central place in Western thinking until the rise of Baconian inductivision.

Eros, conceived of Need and Resource on Aphrodite's birthday, is characterised by Diotima as partaking equally of his mother's poverty and his father's skill, hence his cunning in proving to kalon and to agathon (203b-d). The affirmed permanent fragility of love, now flourishing now dying, is a problem to be overcome within Plato's scheme, though it is not clear that he himself does overcome it, but rather simply leaves it in his consideration of the forms. It is moral and intellectual constancy that Plato wants to focus, but eros here, even as hermeneut and as opening to the Forms, does not of itself offer constancy. Instead it seems to offer a powerful, but vacillating, motivation. Two areas of constancy are focussed: the gods, who in already being wise cannot be said to desire wisdom 204a; (here Plato corrects the Olympians as principles and exemplars of conflict and inconstancy); and the ignorant (hoi amatheis 204e3), who have no desire for wisdom. [Yet who are the ignorant? In the next section, 205, Diotima speaks of eros as common to all mankind (koinon...einai panton anthropon 205a6), as the basic and generalised desire for every kind of flourishing (eudaimonia) and good

(agathon). On this assumption it could not be allowed that there is any simple locus of constancy in ignorance (representing some form of absolute inertia); and eros as a dynamic principle is furthermore soon attributed to all aspects of reality. As inconstancy, though, eros requires an appropriate environment if it is to become a steady orientation towards to kalon].

In correction of Aristophanes, Diotima claims that eros is never the search for the missing half simply, but only insofar as it constitutes to agathon 205e; eros is indeed a longing for the good as a permanent possession. Here eros is seen as a "bringing forth" tokos upon to kalon, a desire awakened by beauty to give birth to what one (the male) carries within: "In this passage Diotima treats the ejaculation of semen by the male, rather than the complete process of creating a child, as a token of that with which the male is 'pregnant'" Dover, Symposium, p147. Eros thus becomes not desire for possession of to kalon (modifying what was said above) but rather a desire for generation (gennesis) - a securing of the theme of generativity already adumbrated, but a powerful retention at the same time of the narcissistic foundation: the male desires to propagate himself through means of the beautiful, to secure his own continuity; birth here is not a mutual process of generation but a solipsistic moment of self-generation, the quest for glory and a cipher of immortality.

This indeed is the next point: eros is a longing for

immortality (tes athanasias 707a3). In one sense this is already there with Aristophanes: eros as the desire for an endlessly lasting fusion with the missing beloved. Diotima, however, presents immortality not in terms of this everlastingness, but rather as an achievement to be won through fame and offspring. As desire for offspring, eros is already manifest in the breeding instinct of animals and birds [30] : for Diotima , all animate reality thus seeks immortality through offspring; in this the mortal does all in its power to achieve immortality (he thnete phusis zetei kala to dunaton aei te einai kai athanatos. 207d1-2). Individuals change constantly throughout their lives; only by leaving something of themselves behind do they mitigate that process. 207d - 208a. In the human sphere, the desire for fame and glory constitutes the orientation to immortality; this was the motivating principle behind the self-sacrifice of Alcestis and Achilles (Diotima thus robs their actions of the element of altruism or gratitude that Phaedrus introduced, together with any simple relation to death he might have premissed: their action is precisely geared to their own transcendence of death).

Diotima distinguishes between those (men) who are pregnant (enkumones) with the fruit of the body (soma), and those pregnant with fruit of the spirit (psuche) - the former turn to women and raise a family to obtain immortality through offspring, while the latter bear the

fruits of the spirit (it is clear that Plato intends here and in what follows, that it is only in the company of other men that a man might bear the fruit of virtue. There is an implied structural contrast here between body: woman and psuche: man. Note that even in the case of desire for physical immortality it is presented that the man is pregnant with his own offspring, using the woman as the occasion to give birth. Here Plato appropriates for the man the kuein/enkumonoun usually used to indicate pregnancy in a woman - cf Dover, Symp. 147.

The man of virtue chooses a virtuous friend in order to give birth to virtue, drawn first, as always, by the beauty of the body 209b. Although presented as forming a kind of family bond with his (male) friend, with both of them raising the offspring of virtue, it seems clear that, while the lover undertakes his partner's education (epicheirei paideuein 209c1-2), it is primarily the offspring of the lover that are being raised; the beloved, as the instance of the beautiful, is merely the occasion for the lover's self-generation in virtue. Thus it is that Homer and Hesiod gave birth to their poetry, that Lycurgus and Solon gave birth to law, (209d). Two points are worth noting here. Firstly, it is implicitly argued that it was the beauty of Sparta and Athens, beloved by Lycurgus and Solon, that enabled the latter to give birth to their creations - thus we have moved beyond the beauty of the individual person to that of the whole community, as part of the process of ascent through degrees of beauty that Diotima

next explicates. And secondly, Plato corrects here the account of law given by Pausanias earlier; what could have been read there as a form of social contract theory changes now so that the vision of to kalon alone is offered as the generative occasion whereby great-minded men achieve and give birth to law. Laws are not so much here the outworking of a democratic process, as the fruit of vision achieved by a few (cf the suggestion at 209a that not many desire to give birth to the things of the psuche). Plato's aristocratic temperament here transcends the fragility of democracy represented at the end by Alcibiades.

The final revelation that Diotima offers is the progression of eros through degrees of beauty, moving from particular to universal by means of a ladder (epanabasmois chromenon, 211c3),

> from one to two and from two to every lovely body, from bodily beauty to the beauty of institutions, from institutions to learning, and from learning in general to the special love that pertains to nothing but the beautiful itself - until at last he comes to know what beauty is. 211c.

The step here through the final elimination of desire - eros having served as ladder - is to a fully contemplative vision of

> an everlasting loveliness which neither comes nor goes, which neither flowers nor fades, for such beauty is the same on every hand, the same then as now, here as there, this way as that way, the same to every worshipper as it is to every other.
> Nor will this vision of the beautiful take the form of a face, or of hands or of anything that is of the flesh. It will be neither words nor knowledge (oude tis logos oude tis episteme 211a7), nor a something that exists in something else, such as a living creature, or the earth, or the heavens, or anything

> that is - but subsisting of itself and by itself in an eternal oneness, while every lovely thing partakes of it in such sort that, however much the parts may wax and wane, it will be neither more nor less, but still the same inviolable whole. 211a-b.

Of this kalon spoken of by Diotima we can take it that Socrates is the incarnation, constant in his interrogation of others, given to spells of contemplative distraction - one of these occurs at the beginning of the dialogue, delaying his arrival at the house of Agathon; another is mentioned by Alcibiades at the end - provoking in others the erotic philosophical quest, his own transcendence of eros metaphorically figured by his permanent sobriety, even after extensive drinking, his vision of to kalon now finally set beyond any threatening inconstancies of intoxication. All of this becomes clear with the arrival of Alcibiades.

g. Alcibiades.

Alcibiades comes a drunken garlanded reveller at a gathering that had foresworn the intoxication of alcohol for that of love. He comes the lover of Socrates, a man whose constancy towards to kalon as transcendent beauty he had never been able to sway by his own earthly beauty, not even arousing his desire on the night they lay together. He comes the younger lover of an older man, reversing the priority given to youth thus far as the prime instance of beauty: it is Socrates now, older, known for his physical ugliness, in whom the secret of to kalon resides. [And it is a secret: Socrates is like the model of a silenus that you have to open to find the god within 215a-b. Here

beauty is no longer the apparent flush and bloom on the surface of things, but something intractable that has to be sought and worked for.] He comes the token of Athenian democracy and beauty, looking to an older beauty and wisdom for a stability it cannot of itself provide - thus Plato corrects democracy in favour of an aristocracy of virtue.

In Socrates as described by Alcibiades Plato presents us with a vision of human constancy that transcends the pressures and contingencies of life. Socrates shows no sense of conflict; his moral vision does not appear as the fruit of a Sophoclean struggle with the fortunes of chance and fate; whatever <u>eros</u> there was in him has now carried him beyond the bounds of a normal life; he is the midwife who brings to birth the virtue in others but has nothing left to bring forth in himself. He is a man marked by an unutterable strangeness, different inside from out, engaged in a constant game of irony 216e. In contrast with the softness of love spoken of by Agathon - a softness, however much expressed through the vision of poetic intoxication, that is at the heart of the most ordinary sense of love as a moment of vulnerability - Socrates is hard, golden, godlike (216e7), the personification of the hard masculine Goddess spoken of by Pausanias. But even here the hardness transcends masculinity; it is instead a moment of inhumanity. Socrates is strange even to other men, to men engaged in the most masculine of endeavours: he deals with the hardship of campaigns better than others, remains

always untouched by drink, can wear the thinnest garb in winter and walk barefoot on icy ground without noticing, remains rooted in one spot a full twenty-four hours, sunrise to sunrise, wrestling with some problem, and then carries on the next day as if nothing were untoward, is completely unconcerned in battle (219e - 221b), and at the end of the dialogue - which has now become a full-blown drinking bout - spends the remainder of the night drinking and discussing with Agathon and Aristophanes before leaving at dawn, the others asleep, for a day's philosophising.

With this Socrates Alcibiades is in love, maddened by his philosophy as if poisoned by a snake 217e-218b. But what is it to be in love thus? Certainly at least for Alcibiades it is to have the inconstancy, the intense extremes, of his own lifestyle focussed and called nto question - but this in itself is no more than a realisation of the meden agan (nothing in excess) of received Delphic wisdom. And if love is for Plato to follow the route of Diotima how do we wish to assess that option? To achieve the final vision beyond words and knowledge is to have lost all particularities and individualities in their uniqueness, this transcendence of particularity being precisely the way to overcome conflict. But it is the particularity of Socrates that Alcibiades loves - a man unique, no-one else like him 221c4-5. - and it is in this singular way that Socrates becomes the incarnation of transcendent beauty. But who here is the ironist, Socrates or Plato himself? Could we, on this reading of Socrates,

ever pass beyond the vision of beauty in an individual man to that of humanity in general, pass thus again to the beauty of laws and institutions, or are we not ineluctably tied to the particular, to the fragments of divinity inside any silenus? And who are we if we are tied thus - do we rank with Socrates or Alcibiades? For Socrates, as the man who has transcended, the particular individual seems to matter in no other sense that as an occasion for his own maieutic art, a subject to be awakened to its inherent possibilities of transcendence. Yet this man would not abandon the particularity of Athenian institutions, would not choose exile in preference over death; but what exile can there be for the one who has achieved his universal vision?

In the end the dialogue leaves us in a state of indecision, but it is the passage of inquiry that matters as much as any final resolution, and that passage is for Plato his version of the cathartic movement of tragedy and of the distancing mirror-effect of the comic. Through the passage of inquiry the space of <u>psuche</u> is deepened and widened, and also given a proper equilibrium that might free it from the chance effects of <u>tuche</u>. As the dialogue ends, before Socrates leaves, he is discussing comic and tragic art with Aristophanes and Agathon; his claim is that the tragic poet might be a comedian as well. The claim, of course, is Plato's own, its realisation his own also, to be found in that fusion and transcendence of opposite genres,

the creation of the dialogue-form as the only fit vehicle for philosophy [32].

CHAPTER 8

AGAPE AND A CHRISTIAN VISION

Plato focussed for us the power of narcissism, the individual's profound and seemingly ineluctable desire for self-fulfilment. Rejecting Aristophanes' fusion of lover and beloved, he finally offers a fusion of the transfigured mind with the object of its quest, only to focus on the individual once more in the unique persona of Socrates.

An important treatment of the idea of agape begins with the quotation from Kirkegaard:

> Erotic love is determined by the object; friendship is determined by the objet; only love to one's neighbour is determined by love. Since one's neighbour is every man, unconditionally every man, all distinctions are indeed removed from the object [1].

The danger with such a statement is its distance from a detailed reading of particular texts. Plato recognises a love for every man as one stage in the ascent of psuche. Kirkegaard here is close to Nygren, whose radical separation of Platonic eros and Christian agape has been a major focus of debate since it was first argued [2]. Yet we can ask whether Plato has not, in the Symposium, comprehended in eros all that might be said in the name of agape.

In remarking Plato's comprehensiveness I do not wish to exclude the question of differing intentionalities at work

in the Platonic and the New Testament material relative to each other, nor to conceal the ways in which "Plato" and the "New Testament" themselves constitute names for sets of differing intentionalities. There are varying ways in which we might choose to read eros and agape within the Platonic and the New Testament texts. The Symposium is one occasion where Plato reflects on eros, but a different reading might be generated from the Phaedrus or the Republic. Equally, the notion that the New Testament might contain a singular stance of any sort became profoundly problematic when acknowledgement is made of the diversity of New Testament theologies, and when these themselves are internally disrupted through the force of contemporary critical reading. Given this, there are varying ways in which we might read the relations between eros and agape. We might see these terms as simply naming quite different kinds of ethical and religious experience and stance, thus having a minimum degree of overlap. With Nygren we might consider agape to name a more profundly religious orientation than that which eros focusses - the question of radical difference, problematic as it is, becomes here also a hierarchical placing of agape over eros. We may with Nietzsche view the christian materials in general as expressive of a slave morality, supreme instance of a religion of resentment that has worked a corrupting influence on Western culture, and give the privilege instead to a Greek concept of heroic arete that has eros as its dynamic principle. Or we might

alternatively claim that there is an extensive overlap in the attitudes and lifestyles designated by the two terms, remarking the difficulties of reading that must be worked through if the terms are at all adequately to be understood, and acknowledging also that these difficulties only become fully apparent when a comparison of terms is pursued.

1. Founding Fathers: Socrates. Jesus, Confucius.

Each of the primary terms that we are considering - eros, agape, and ren - is focussed in a particular way, according to the tradition of interpretation within which it is articulated, in the life and teaching of a particular individual; the different ways in which those individuals themselves were perceived, when seen in relation to each other, might help us to a first recording of differences between these terms.

Socrates appears for Plato as a man of knowledge and a moment of revelation; his changing status in the dialogues, passing from simple historical subject to cipher of transcendence, marks the movement in Plato's knowledge of the world Socrates disclosed. A similar transition can be seen from the three synoptic gospels to the gospel of John: the historical Jesus becomes progressively the sign of divine transcendence as his status in the world becomes more open to reflection. The movement here is through and beyond the individual as such towards the transcendence he is reckoned to focus. While Mencius speaks of Confucius as

a sage, the concern in early Confucianism is not with Confucius as transcendent figure but rather as wise teacher who carried on an already existing tradition of virtue: when Confucius becomes a focus of state veneration in the Han period, his status as sage secured, this should certainly be viewed as an act within political theology - within the theorisation of cosmic order that Han Confucians undertook - but it should not be read as making Confucius the singular focus of transcendence.

Jesus is presented as opening a radically new religious and moral order. He supercedes what has gone before and, depending on the emphasis, either completes an earlier imperfect religious vision or annuls its significance. In speaking of agape he is reckoned to be the incarnaton of God himself as agape. Socrates also seems to open up a radically new stance, at least as Plato understands him: the move here is from the tragic inconstancy of everyday life to the constancy of the Forms. Socrates opens for Plato a vision of the philosophical quest which completes and annuls previous partial readings of eros: as Plato would dismiss Homer, so we see him finding in Socrates a new teaching that might replace the old dispensation. Socrates is not identified with eros; rather, in the eyes of Alcibiades, he is the human incarnation of that kalon which is the object of eros. Socrates bears originally the mark of Delphic wisdom; if he can be said to possess eros, it is as a desire to waken others to the truth. Confucius specifically claims not to offer a new teaching (though his

teaching is in fact new) but rather to preserve the wisdom of the ancients. This already embeds any concept of transcendence within a normative tradition [3] . Jesus and Socrates both claim openness to, and visitation by, a divine voice as source of their wisdom and teaching authority. Confucius claims simply to interpret what is already established. Jesus and Socrates both put a relationship with transcendence at the heart of their teaching; Confucius ascribes centrality to a normative human community and its ideal past [4].

Jesus and Socrates were both put to death by, or with the support of, their communities, and the style and content of their teaching served strongly to precipitate this. Indeed we can say that both men courted and finally chose death as an inevitable consequence of fidelity to their vision and of belief in its significance. Jesus carried on teaching in Jerusalem in circumstances where death could not be avoided. Socrates chose hemlock over escape and exile. Both men thus indicated that the practice of _agape_ and the erotic pursuit of _to kalon_ entailed a choice for open confrontation with the given political order when this was against _agape_, or when it did not give credence to philosophical _eros_. [From within the gospel tradition Jesus' death is already viewed theologically as an atoning sacrifice. We will see that there are no grounds for thinking Jesus himself saw his death in this light. Nonetheless, such early theologising

has left its mark on subsequent readings of agape as self-sacrifical love]. The confrontational element evident in Confucius' life - as this is recorded for us - and in his teaching on ren is, by contrast, of a minimum. Confucius accepted his daughter's marriage to a man in prison, but we are not told that his followers should expect prison or punishment for following his dao, and Mencius specifically excludes that a Confuciuan, ru, should spend time in prison. Given the mandate to preserve life and honour the ancestors, there is a strong basis (evident also amongst the Daoists as we have seen) to link virtue with longevity. There is no transcendent goal to complete a life terminated early in the pursuit of virtue, though Confucius does say if he must choose between life and virtue he will choose virtue. Meucius spoke out aganst the corrupt exercise of rulership, and his stance was crucial for later Confucians who would criticise rulers of the day. Mencius nonetheless preserved his life, and there may be in his work an aspect of indirectness and allegory such as transforms later Confucian moral and political exhortation into a veiling of critique that might thus preserve the critic's safety.

In the case of Jesus, it is often as much his actions as his teaching that focusses the nature of agape, whereas with Socrates and Confucius actions are not so central or, perhaps better, speak in a different way. For Alcibiades Socrates' deeds - his fits of abstraction, moments of bravery, abstention from sexuality - manifest part of what

is at stake in philosophical eros; and Confucius' behaviour at meals, funerals and at court, indicates his adherence to li and ren. But with Jesus actions are reckoned to have a particularly transfiguring effect, whether they are presented in stories of healing or in those other occurrences marks by the word "miracle." The life of Jesus itself seems to be viewed as a more potent force by the New Testament traditions than does that of Socrates or Confucius by their immediate traditions, and his death is also seen as a powerful act that initiates the work of the Spirit. With this stress on the miraculous we have the sense of a strongly transfigured world made manifest by a particular individual. On the other hand, Fingarette emphasises that for Confucius virtuous behaviour in general is a holy, transfiguring act, and it is clear that Alcibiades saw the world differently once stung by Socrates' particular beauty. The comparative assessment - indeed, comprehension - of the different visions of life at work here is thus deeply problematic [5].

One crucial point is the way in which the life and teaching of each individual came to be figured in subsequent narratives. Socrates and Jesus both provoked styles of writing that were unique in relation to their received traditions. We have seen already how Plato constructed the philosophical dialogue as a means of purveying the kind of truth that intrigued him, distinguishing his stance from received tragic and comic

genres; within this dialogue-form Socrates played a leading role, and his style of inquiry - linked with his philosophical daimon - can be taken as progenitor of it. But the details of his life figure also in moments of narrative, or centrally in such a dialogue as the Apology: the person, as much as his philosophical style, is at stake here. Jesus' work also left its mark on literary form, provoking the singular event of four canonical theological biographies, without parallel as a genre in extant Jewish and Near Eastern writings of the period or earlier. But if the life and teaching of each of these men served to inaugurate a new writing, then the same holds true for Confucius: the Analects marks a new departure in the Zhou world and - even though the prior literary tradition is not extensive, so that there was still broad scope for different literary forms to emerge - it took its place as a record of the essence of the man of li as of his teaching, inaugurating a tradition where philosophical conversation remained crucial.

We might finally note how each of these men concentrated on different aspects of the person in their teachings on eros, agape, and ren. Plato favoured the intellectual aspect of psuche, severing psuche from soma and distinguishing its intellectual and valorous moments from the mass of turbulent emotion. There is no easy vision here of the heart as a principle of love and affection. This, by contrast, is of the essence in Jesus' teaching: at the centre of agape is a notion of unbounded openness to

and concern for others, an affectionate stance limited by neither class, nationality, gender or religion. And if we take the Mencian reading of Confucius, we find here also a vital place given to the compassionate heart (we have remarked, furthermore, the appropriate translation of xin as mind-and-heart). For Confucius, the given community, and the bonds of virtue and decorum uniting it, is central; the intellectual function of xue is a knowledge of the community and its traditions. [We could complicate the account here by noting that Plato's stress on intellect is in order to secure the ultimate rational principles of the ideal community, thus marking a different intentionality from that implicit in xue [6]. By contrast again , the place accorded to study, scholarship, or intellect in the Gospels is minimal, though a tradition of scholarship with which Jesus was familiar can certainly be presupposed.]

2. Agape and Self-love

> Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all you strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself. Lk. 10:27

With these two commandments Jesus offers an interpretation of the essence of Jewish ethical and religious experience. What is at stake here will be explored in different ways in this chapter; to start with we can focus on the question of self-love.

On a first reading the command to love one's neighbour presupposes self-love. The ethical stance that Jesus

enjoins thus seems to incorporate an aspect of psychological possibility and plausibility confirmed by contemporary thinking: love for others is only consequent on a degree of positive self-regard. Self-regard and self-love, however, are not necessarily the same thing: an adult capacity for positive self-regard arises from the experience of having been loved consistently in childhood; analogously, it might be argued that Jesus presents the requirement to love others as consequent on the fact that the individual has already been loved unconditionally by God. [The love-relationship of God with his chosen people has already been focussed in the earlier Jewish writings, and so is taken for granted].

If, however we make a distinction between self-regard and self-love it need not be to exclude self-love from self-regard; it could be argued that self-love - or the wholehearted acceptance of self with whatever faults and failings - is a much more difficult thing to achieve than self-regard. It may be then that, in suggesting that one loves others as self, Jesus is pointing to the difficulties in loving others that exist precisely because of difficulties in loving self. In the guise of an ethical imperative, he perhaps thus presents us with an ethical conundrum that works towards an awakening of insight into the nature and difficulties of love, a strategy that, as we shall see, he employs more fully in his parables.

Speaking of self-love can be distracting if "self" is

thought of as a term of relationship, analagous to "others". Certainly I can make myself an object of reflection and concern in various ways: I can examine my beliefs, worry about my health, wonder what kind of person I appear as to others. When writers such as Kierkegaard, Nygren and Niebuhr seek to exclude self-love from the ethical stance of Jesus, they perceive self-love as involving a kind of division in the self of this sort: the individual thinks about, and calculates on behalf of, self at some level and in some way in any concern for others: self-love thus implies a root level of selfishness. We can indeed consider whether some such measure of narcissism is not an inevitable feature in any human life. But we might establish first that it is in fact possible to <u>speak</u> of self-love in a different way: self need not be thought of as the permanent hidden object of one's love, "self-love" may instead refer to a state of completest well-being and self-acceptance, the only possible point of departure from which we can approach others without a measure of self-seeking. We can consider how plausible such a notion is.

Plato's <u>eros</u> is the main object of attack for Nygren and others: they find it fully premissed on a notion of self-seeking, and we have already remarked the recurring narcissistic element in the <u>Symposium</u>. But <u>eros</u> is presented there in terms of an ascent, a formation through various stages; and while the lover who chooses a partner in order to give birth to his own virtue can certainly be

said to be self-seeking - seeking the immortality of his own name - we can reflect on the degree to which the passage towards the vision of to kalon is a path of self-transcendence which, in opening psuche to an infinite world beyond itself, moves away from any possibility of attachment to self. This movement of ascent seems also to imply a movement of return: this is not explicated, but it appears that Socrates is one who has achieved the vision of to kalon and who then returns to the market place of Athenian life - much as the Chan monk does - to direct the eros of others towards a path of self-transcendence [7].

That much said, it can be asked whether there is a point within the ascent of eros where the self is transcended, or whether this only comes in the final vision where eros as such as transcended. As this question is pursued, the nature of self-transcendence becomes problematic: even when the concern is no longer with production of one's own virtue, but rather with the beauty of laws and institutions, as one passes from the particular to the universal, how might one assess the degree of attachment to self as subject of this visionary intellectual experience? There is no obvious criterion that can be introduced for evaluation here. We might suggest the individual becomes progressively more open to others in his passage to the universal. But what of the mathematician or scientist who becomes so absorbed in the world of theoretical reflection, of apparently universal laws , that other individuals

become of negligible concern? We might claim that the individual becomes more active for the good of society in general,once he loses concern with the attainment of his own virtue. But what of the almost solipsistic pleasure that can come from reflection on theoretical concerns, the primacy of contemplation over action? We might suggest that, instead of valuing others for the satisfaction we get from their manifest beauty, we might with Alcibiades come to love that which, like Socrates, is manifestly ugly, thence to discover a different kind of beauty "within", which can only be found once we have relinquished that concern with self-satisfaction that beauty can awaken. But Diotima makes plain the point that holds for Athenian culture generally: it is manifest beauty that is prized, and will always be prized, as the initial focus for eros; with the singular exception of Socrates, that which is ugly is excluded from the erotic vision.

There are passageways here of desire, attachment and self-seeking that are labyrinthine and interminable; they must be followed, however, in trying to get a first siting of agape in relation to self-love.

A component in eros that Nygren would exclude from agape is the movement of quest: eros marks a human quest for transcendent beauty and goodness, while agape marks a human disposition that is only found as the the product of transcendent goodness manifesting itself freely, quite independent of any quest. Any quest for transcendence is

for Nygren an act of hubris - though I think we can take it here that Plato has circumscribed the area of hubris sufficiently for it to be progressively eliminated in the erotic journey. Nonetheless, there is an important difference in intentionality between New Testament writers and Plato on the issues here. Jesus inherited a tradition of thinking which made the Jewish people, if anything, the objects of God's quest - in Amos and Hosea the people take the passive role of the beloved in relation to God's active desire [8] . That desire evinces, in a paradoxical way, a lack in God that only the people can meet. If the people love God in return, it is because they are in the position of Phaedrus and Agathon: their eros - if we can use that word here - must take the form of gratitude. The love shown by the beloved rather than the lover is what Jesus focusses in agape. That love is an active love insofar as it is directed towards the well-being of others, but it is not insofar as geared to one's own self-fulfilment: the search for self-fulfilment is made redundant insofar as God's unconditional love is pre-supposed.

All of this is a surface phenomenology of certain dominant aspects of the relevant texts. We might complicate things by asking two questions: to what extent might Socrates' disposition, after the vision of to kalon, be characterised as agape - is the return to the marketplace an exercise of agape? And to what extent are certain active dispositions which are recorded in the New Testament analogous to eros before the full force of divine

agape is known? On the latter, for instance we might simply note the progressive stages through which the followers of Jesus pass in coming to understand him and his teaching [9] . This might be regarded as an ascent to the vision of transcendent beauty manifest in the form of Jesus - a necessary pedagogy if the full incorporation of agape into an individual life is to be achieved, and thus a progressive awakening of eros as an ascent to agape. And on the former, we might say that the sense of absolute flourishing and well-being (eudaimonia) consequent on the vision of to kalon might be reckoned similar to the well being that comes from knowing the love of God; Socrates thus returns from his vision with a sense of agape. This much can stand as a first inter-reading of these terms and texts.

3. Agape and Love of Others.

Jesus presents the command to love as a command to love one's neighbour; the definition of the neighbour is obviously crucial here in establishing the range of agape. There are two issues that open up as we begin to consider this question: to whom, and under what circumstances, should one show agape; who, and under what circumstances, is capable of showing agape.

We have seen that Confucius would extend his teaching work to the barbarians, and that he reckoned them thus capable of accepting Zhou culture. Whether his relationship with them would have been characterised, on

his part, as ren, and whether they might have been considered, in any sense, as capable of attaining ren, are undecidable from the text; as part of any conclusion we would require a more differentiated concept of "barbarians." But Confucius is sure of the superiority of Zhou culture, and sure that it is the barbarians who would change in accomodating themselves to it.

Plato and Socrates seem equally sure of the superiority of Hellenic culture in general, when contrasted with that of the Persians and other barbarians; and of the superiority of Athenian culture within the Hellenic world [10]. Socrates philosophised within the laws of Athens, and in the Symposium Pausanias argues the superiority of the Athenian code in its treatment of eros. Plato presupposes a well-ordered community of virtue as the necessary context within which the fruits of eros might be borne. To stray beyond that context is by definition to risk intellectual and moral sterility. Furthermore, the extent to which outsiders might communicate in an Athenian community of virtue is problematic. Resident aliens, metoikoi, constituted a recognised non-franchised group within the city, but it is not clear how Plato would have perceived their participation in Athenian life, and the presence of foreign Sophistic teachers such as Gorgias and Protagoras was taken by him as one sign and cause of Athenian decline: their ethical relativism intensified the possibility of ethical conflict that he sought to transcend in an ontology of ethics, or - to focus a different side of

the issue - their relativism revealed ethics to be simply that play of power which he sought, through the greatest exercise of power, to reduce to harmony [11].

It seems, in contrast with the polarity of propriety-barbarism which we find with Confucius and Plato, that Jesus sought to remove any barrier to the practice of agape: all individuals are loved by God, all can equally be the focus of human agape, all whatever their background, are capable of showing agape. Jesus thus breaks with any notion that one has to belong within Judaism in order to receive or show agape; he abrogates the particular codified details of Jewish life in favour of the twofold command to love God and love one's neighbour. We might consider to what extent the Jewish law - the notions of propriety, the people, the homeland - might be read, with Mencius and Lu Xiangshan , as footnotes to the loving heart, but we should remark first that it is the power of the heart to love unconditionally that Jesus seeks to focus.

[This much said we should note that Jesus' sayings and notions are embedded in New Testament writings which do not necessarily agree with his stance. We cannot cover the range of New Testament diversity here, but we should note that there is at least one contrast, after Jesus' death, between a Jewish Christianity that would keep his teaching within the orbit of Jewish life, as a fulfilment of it, and retain Jewish codes as a pedagogy in Christian virtue, and

a Gentile Christianity which separated Christian practice from any necessary link with Judaism].

(i) Jesus and The Kingship of God.

It is commonly recognised that Jesus preached the coming or presence of God's basileia (whether kingdom or kingship we will consider), that preaching was an essential part of his work, and that he associated himself in a particular way with the advent of the basileia. One recent study interprets the issues thus:

> "The Kingdom of God" denotes the manifest rule of God whose intervention will bring to an end the history of this world as we know it and its judgement...we must recognise this expectation of the Kingdom of God's imminence to be part of Jesus' Kingdom, otherwise we do scant justice to a key and characteristic emphasis of his public proclamation...But even more distinctive of his kerygua was his proclamation that the Kingdom of God was in some way already being realised through his ministry.
>
> Dunn 1977: 13-14.

One approach to the ideas here is to consider basileia in relation to concepts of law. We have examined Confucian organicist philosophies, where the notion of law as principle, li, is a notion about the immanence of normative patterns within nature as part of the given structure of things. The world is an organic, self-regulating, self-developing whole, and the concept of it as in some sense a formed and fashioned object, the work of a transcendent maker and lawgiver, is almost totally alien. In Mesopotamian and Jewish religious traditions, however, the idea of God as creator, lawgiver and lord, with the correlative notion of God as radically other than the

world, is central [12]. Jewish literature is replete with the idea of law in a twofold sense: God ordains the processes of nature, governing the movement of the stars, the seasons, the alternation of day and night; and God reveals to the human community that law whereby it might perfect itself in holiness in the image of God himself. In principle there is here a presumed continuity between the law revealed in nature, as of nature, and that revealed through the inspired words of the prophets. By the time of Jesus - for some centuries prior - there is also the notion that the process of divine revelation is complete: the law has been given, and there s nothing further to be added apart from scribal and levitical practices of commentary and intepretation. That interpretation, however, carried on in the flux of changing circumstances, is by definition an interminable process, a necessary feature of the world's continuing course.

In speaking of the basileia of God Jesus breaks with received Jewish interpretations of the community of law, stepping beyond that community in one sense in order to affirm the possibility of a direct relationship with God, a possibility of healing and wholeness outside the law (whilst also maintaining a certain personal commitment to the religion of synagogue and temple). One reading of this stance is that Jesus saw in himself and his work the moment of realized eschatology: the end of time had come, these were the last days, the old law was overcome, and a new dispensation would obtain for the short sp ell before the

imminent termination of all history. The Kingdom expected was, in some literal sense, the rule of God on earth. However, while it seems that many early Christians subscribed for a time to such a view of Jesus' work, and the change it had inaugurated, there is in fact no evidence to confirm that this is what Jesus himself believed, while the vision presented in the parables - which I take to be teaching devices developed to explicate the notion of basileia - is of quite a different sort [13].

Almost consistently the parables - as other items of Jesus' teaching - focus on the most natural features of the world and of social life, whilst presenting them in such a way as to make of what is given, received, "natural", an occasion of wonder and challenging confrontation, thus breaking down preconceptions and awakening insight into the possibilities of love as a universal relationship between persons. The basileia is both a visionary event - an insight into the natural world as a spontaneous harmonious process, and into the human world as a community of persons open to agape - and also a moral event, a receptiveness to the lives and needs of others that entails disavowal of any received structure of self-perception and identity. As a teacher Jesus has the form of a Chan master, his parables the form of koans; taking the parables alone, we might conclude that he dispenses with any concept of a transcendent God, focussing instead on the immanence of the basileia in the world-process, and characterising it as

that restructured space open to and supportive of the practice of agape. Viewed in this light the basileia becomes the ever-present possibility of being radically at home in the world, and radically open to others; the end-time is a shift from chronos to kairos which is itself a shift of vision. The special relationship Jesus has with the basileia is that he understands these things and works to communicate their significance [14].

(ii) Agape and the Parables.

In a variety of ways in the parables Jesus turns received and current Jewish wisdom upside down. The charge against him of keeping company with tax-gatherers and sinner - with those collaborating with the occupying power, and those ritually and morally unclean in the terms of orthodoxy -, whilst constituting a criticism of him in the eyes of his Jewish adversaries, constitutes more fundamentally an acknowledgement that even the most outcast social elements were recipients of his agape. The same point holds when he heals the son of a centurion: agape extends to enemies, even to those who circumscribe and threaten national identity. [We will give further consideration below to the command to love one's enemies, and the implications this has for any moral theory].

One author defines parables as "paradoxes formed into story by effecting single or double reversals of the audience's most profound expectations." Crossan 1976:98. In this he emphasises that the use of paradox in the

parables forecloses any reading of them as example-stories: it is not so much that parables convey moral teaching, as that they overturn received expectations about moral values, leaving it to the audience to re-formulate its moral stance within a new perspective. We encounter here a difficulty in reading paradox that is similar to that already met in relation to Zhuangzi and Chan: does the paradox leave us completely without ground or foundation, or does it, by means of some exemplary moment in its presentation, show us a specific way towards a new form of behaviour? My reading here is that, paradoxical though the parables of Jesus may be, they are also at times exemplary of new forms of ethical behaviour, focussing in particular on behaviour governed by agape.

Much that supports this point can be found in the parable of the good Samaritan (Lk 10:30-35) - a parable which in its title carries the kind of illuminating contradiction that the narrative manifests: as a tale told to a Jewish audience, its focus is on the goodness of one who was a heretic and outcast according to the lights of Jewish orthodoxy, a man who showed love and concern in a most exaggerated manner to one who should be considered his enemy; the Samaritan's generosity is further heightened by the failure of the representatives of Judaism to care for their own [16]. Thus, the man left for dead by thieves is ignored first by a priest and then by a Levite: these two pillars of orthodoxy cannot risk an act of mercy for fear of the ritual pollution they would suffer if they happened

to have contact with a corpse; the Samaritan, already ritually unclean in Jewish eyes, is, precisely here as an outsider, shown also to be outside any system of law that might distinguish between one's own and others, and so acts with an immediacy of compassion that is akin to that directness characteristic of the Mencian heart-and-mind. Here firstly there is a reversal of the values clean-unclean: the ritually clean priest and Levite are judged in the story morally unclean: the ritually unclean Samaritan is morally without stain. And secondlythere is a reversal of expectations about care: the leaders of the Jewish community do not know how to love their own, whereas a traditional enemy of the Jews shows one of them love without apparent inhibition or limit.

In one sense the parable does not give the example of love for neighbours that its setting in the gospel suggests. The context Luke provides is that where a lawyer, having summarised the Law as love of God and of one's neighbour, asks Jesus "And who is my neighbour?" (Lk 10:2). If a simple example of love of neighbour were at stake and if the intention were to disrupt the category of "enemy" by saying that all men are one's neighbours without boundary - then it would have been sufficient to have a Jew showing care to an injured Samaritan. Instead, however, Jesus presents an indictment of Jewish orthodoxy as a massive failure in love, and focusses on the enemy as the one who is capable of <u>agape</u>; thus raising for his audience

the question of whether, in their received tradition, with its detailed rules and regulations governing life, it is in fact possible under any circumstance to be neighbours to each other.

The reaction against the current practice of the Law that Jesus presents here is in fact a questioning of the possibility of any law, any system of rules, rights and proprieties, to found a community of love. Mencius does not perhaps call Confucius' li into question in quite the same way, though he does show a marked disdain for the functions of li. With Jesus, anything other than the most minimal formulation of law emerges as a problem; law is seen as marking a concern with self-seeking, with establishing one's own virtue and integrity, with possessing a certainty that one is on the right path and that that path is superior to the path of others; law and the formalisation of human behaviour is thus shown as something that systematically closes off any possibility of direct response to need as encountered [17] . In particular the indictment of the law is the indictment of power and authority: analogously once more with Mencius - though drawing on direct contact and experience that we cannot presuppose with Mencius - Jesus finds in the daily life of the common people a certain locus of virtue: God is with the poor not the powerful, with those suffering under law rather than those formulating it and enjoying its privileges. This at least is part of the case; though the status of "ordinary life" is not left undisturbed.

Commenting on an impulse behind Wittgenstein's philosophy, Stanley Cavell remarks

> What motivates Wittgenstein to philosophize, what surprises him, is the plain fact that certain creatures have speech at all, that they can say things at all. No doubt it is not clear how one might go about becoming surprised by such a fact. It is like being surprised by the fact that there is such a thing as the world. Cavell, 1979:15.

This kind of surprise that anything <u>is</u> appears also as a basic sense of surprise shared by Jesus: it is evident in relation to the natural world, in certain parables of growth, such as that of the mustard seed, where the focus is not on the process of growth as a natural law-bound phenomenon capable of interpretation according to any received schema, but rather on the world and its change as a wondrous occurrence, a marvel in its very existence irrespective of how one might try to understand it [18].

To wonder at things thus, however, and to extend that wonder to a questioning of the how and why of any community, is to remove the possibility of security in life for anyone receptive to the question, whether exercising power or subject to it. The space opened by the parable of the Samaritan is vertiginous in that it throws into question any demarcation of neighbours and enemies, of one's own and others, thus rendering questionable any concept of community. What is community, why does it exist, why is it rule-bound and can it be otherwise, which rules are worth maintaining, why remain with one community rather than the other, why have hierarchy instead of

equality of status, why any unequal distribution of material goods? If these questions work to render the familiar strange they are not, however, nihilistic, though they do mark the opening of a challenge to rethink basic assumptions - the opening, that is, of the space of metanoia, the transformation of mind and heart, characterised as rebirth, that is given as a condition of entry to the basileia. Yet with Jesus these questions involve more than a change simply in individual attitude: they are also oriented to the refounding of community and this marks a significant difference in the specificity of paradox in Jesus' life and work in comparison with Zhuangzi and Chan. In both of the latter instances we have seen how the world is left unchanged after the passage through paradox and enlightenment: certainly one's own way of viewing the world changes radically, but the Chan adept, if not to the monastery, returns to the everyday life of the market place, whilst the ethical stance that derives from Zhuangzi's teaching is difficult to determine. Jesus, by contrast, extends the force of questioning into a pattern of social action, healing, working wonders, confronting those in authority, getting followers to continue and spread his teaching. While we can take it that he did not specifically found a church - the early Christian community itself writing into the gospels its own founding charter - he did nonetheless gather around him a community refounded on the idea of agape. He thus used paradox to begin to make the world otherwise, and that making is an essential

continuation of his teaching. There is an ethical imperative at work here; Zhu Xi also, as we have seen, founded neo-Confucianism in part on the perceived failure of Chan in the ethical and social apheres.

To describe things thus is, however, only one way of putting issues, and perhaps not the best; for while we have seen that Zhu focusses on the failure of contemporary Buddhist practice in relation to the larger social order, we have also noticed how the Buddhist monastery, together with the charitable foundations it inaugurated, and together with its focus on the profoundly agapeic figure of the bodhisattva, constituted both a refounded community and a set of strategies for extending the way of that community into the social sphere. Certainly it is difficult to read a concern with community into Zhuangzi, but in a sense the times were against him on that point; on the other hand, we did note the village utopianism of the Daodejing, and the ideas marked there remained an inspiration in Chinese tradition relating to new communities founded on simplicity.

4. Agape and Love of Enemies.

> Whatever else has been done to damage the powerful and great of this earth seems trivial compared with what the Jews have done, that priestly people who succeeded in avenging themselves on their enemies and oppressors by radically inverting all their values, that is, by an act of the most spiritual vengeance. It was the Jews who, with frightening consistency, dared to invert the aristocratic value equations good/noble/powerful/beautiful/happy/favoured-of-the-gods and maintain, with the furious hatred of the under privileged and impotent, that "only the poor,

> the powerless, are good; only the suffering, si and ugly, truly blessed. But you noble and mighty ones of the earth will be, to all eternity, the evil, the cruel, the avaricious, the godless, and thus the cursed and damned!"....We know who has fallen heir to this Jewish inversion of values...From the tree trunk of Jewish vengeance and hatred - the deepest and sublimest hatred in human history, since it gave birth to ideals and a new set of values - grew a branch that was equally unique: a new love, the deepest and sublimest of loves. From what other trunk could this branch have sprung? But let no-one surmise that this love represented a denial of the thirst for vengeance, that it contravened the Jewish hatred. Exactly the opposite is true. Love grew out of hatred as the tree's crown, spreading triumphantly in the purest sunlight, yet having, in its high and sunny realm, the same aims - victory, aggrandizement, temptation - which hatred pursued by digging its roots ever deeper into all that was profound and evil.
> Nietzsche, The Geneaology of Morals

Nietzsche's critique of the slave-morality of Christianity - a morality which for him constitutes the supreme outworking, in all its details, of a philosophy of resentment - is perhaps nowhere more pointed than with reference to the command to turn the other cheek once struck, to love the enemy, the persecutor. In this we have part of what Kristeva reads as a position of abjection, a radical denial of any possible self-worth, which links here paradoxically to the claims of absolute self-worth consequent on being seized by the redeeming love of God [19]. To suffer maltreatment willingly, abjectly, can be at once the most profound denial of self, a hatred equally of body and soul as ineluctably tainted, and an act of pride in the fact that the God who sees all will in the end punish the wrongdoer and reward the righteous; resentment here thus incorporates knowledge of a righteousness greater than that of the enemy [20].

In one sense the command to love one's enemy can thus evoke a sense of absolute moral superiority: whatever the enemy does one will always be able to go beyond him in forgiveness. In Stoic philosophies at the time of Jesus the desire to remain superior to the enemy at all costs is also evident, though the way followed here is continuous with the heroic arete of Greek culture, and the stance assumed is more one where enemies are ignored as a nuisance in their wrongdoing rather than forgiven for it [21]. The Stoic seeks that position of apatheia and ataraxia which is one of immunity to harm or insult; thus Epictetus

> He will feel no pain, no anger, no compulsion, no hindrance but...will pass (his life) in tranquillity and in freedom from every disturbance...He contemplates and reflects, "How no evil can befall me, for me there is no such thing as an earthquake, everything is full of peace, everything full of tranquillity; every road, every city, every fellow-traveller, neighbour, companion, all are harmless
> Discourses III 13.11,13.

And Seneca indicates that the Stoic ethic incorporates an essentially public stance of preserving honour and avoiding shame: by responding to a harm done to him the honourable man lowers his own dignity:

> "But of course there is some pleasure in anger" you say, "and it is sweet to return a smart." Not at all; for it is not honourable as in acts of kindness to requite benefits so to requite injuries with injuries. In the one case it is shameful to be outdone, in the other not to be outdone.
> De Ira 32

The dignity focussed here is already a feature of the morality of the master outlined by Nietzsche, even if in Stoicism this is to be reckoned in decline from its

Athenian grandeur; its difference from the stance of the slave, who must in humility swallow any concern with dignity - and who lacks anyway the power to reinforce his dignity should he choose - is thus profound.

The slave swallows his pride; but, more than that, he holds, by swallowing, the defilement that can never come upon him from outside but only from within: "nothing that goes into a man from outside can defile him; no, it is the things that come out of him that defile a man" (Mk. 7:15); "a man is not defiled by what goes into his mouth, but by what comes out of it" (Mk. 15:11). But the things that come out of a man - pace possession through demonic forces - are the things that are always already there: the inner defilement, to which the enemy can add nothing, is originally given as a state of sinfulness before God. Here, much as we may read in the teaching of Jesus an abrogation of the old Law, we must reckon nonetheless the power of that Law - the power of received jewish thinking on man's relations with God - as the formative matrix within which a new doctrine of love was rooted. Part of that matrix is the movement, within Jewish history, towards an increasing internalisation of the sense of original sinfulness; first the geographic representation, departure from a place of original innocence, consignment to labour and to a sexuality known as painful; then the ritual order, laws governing a structured field of clean and unclean, the external location of defilement with emphasis on a set of

practices which bring pollution if they are infringed; finally the order of ethics and individual spirituality, where the heart is poisoned at birth and the healing that comes is found within the mediating righteousness of the community as it mantains its fidelity to the Law.

Whether we read the stress on inner defilement and original sinfulness as part of Jesus' view of humanity, or as a perception of the early Church taking stock of Jewish teaching, we thus nonetheless find Jesus' teaching on love rooted in the play of Jewish semiosis, where the innermost heart of the person is construed as radically evil (and here we should contrast Mencius on the radical innate goodness of the mind-and-heart). This context also focusses the symbolic distance, and the leap required, if one is to achieve a stance of self-love. Here, while the command to love enemies might seem to constitute the hardest of the christian virtues, in many respects it is a stance profoundly compatible with the main thrust of Jewish thinking: abasement before God, incorporating an original self-hatred, extends readily to become abasement before others, with advice to turn the other cheek simply an extension of this attitude. Self-love, on the other hand - the recognition of self as worthy of esteem - becomes deeply problematic [22].

Whilst part of the psychological basis for love of enemies is thus already prepared in this way within Judaism, it would be a mistake to conduct our reading

entirely via a Nietzschean philosophy of resentment. To turn the other cheek might well be a sublime inversion and retention of hatred, but there is also another move at work in Jesus' teaching, as we have seen in the parable of the Good Samaritan. This involves a deconstruction of the very category "enemy", a questioning of that foundational polarity of "own" and "others" whereby religious and cultural values ar established. The move here is an invitation to take the position of "the enemy", to view the world from his or her perspective, whilst also moving out of one's own world by coming to find it strange and disconcerting. A move of this sort can transform the enemy into the neighbour or brother, the one with whom one can share a life of empathy, recognising the joys and sufferings that are part of the common lot of humanity.

Given a move of this sort, we have perhaps two readings of "enemy", one strong and one weak. On the weak reading, the enemy is simply the neighbour in disguise. Certainly the disguise might be very effective, the encrustation of a centuries-old ideology, an often-necessary projection in order to maintain a sense of cultural identity, but a disguise that can nonetheless be seen through, insight thus leading to new more inclusive forms of relationship. Here the enemy is in part one's own creation. On the strong reading the enemy chooses to sustain himself in an oppositional stance, maintains himself as the one who hates and would destroy, resisting any overture to redefine his role as that of a neighbour. It is before this enemy that

one turns the other cheek, and it is the status of this enemy that has been profoundly problematic in Christian thinking.

The reading of Jesus' death as a redeeming self-sacrifice is the utmost extension of the argument not to resist the force of the enemy, whilst at the same time maintaining one's own integrity. The human world given over to sin is viewed as the enemy of God. In loving this enemy to the point of death Jesus is reckoned both to have robbed it of its power as enemy - removing the mark of sin - whilst at the same time showing, as far as is humanly possible, that it is never necessary to maintain the stance of enemy, that it is possible to change, and that one can love those who refuse to change. All of this is set within a theological context, a vision of movement from God and return to God, that makes the possibility of this form of love capable of realisation. On this point, for instance, Paul is clear: to love one's enemies without reserve and not be reborn with God is the sheerest folly; the possibility of a resurrected life is the necessary presupposition for Christian agape:

> if the dead are not raised, it follows that Christ was not raised; and if Christ was not raised your faith has nothing in it...If it is for this life only that Christ has given us hope, we of all men are most to be pities. But the truth is, Christ was raised to life...As in Adam all men die, so in Christ all will be brought to life...1 Cor 15:16-22.[23]

Whilst this view of a resurrected life is central to New Testament belief - and allows for the healing power of

divine agape to change the material cosmos itself - there is a sense in which it leaves the practical question of how to love one's enemies unresolved; or rather, it leaves in the background the question of that structural order whereby a community of agape might sustain itself in time and history in relation to those identified as "enemies". Voegelin has emphasised what he terms the metastatic faith of Paul, a faith which draws on the vision of a radically new life opened up by Jesus, and which stresses the deepening and fulfilment of that life beyond death.

For such faith the given historical time is viewed as liable to imminent curtailment, and any extended ethical stance takes on an interim significance: Paul is more concerned to elaborate the meaning of his vision of Christ, and the immediate implications of the experience of salvation, than to envision the detailed structure of a community maintaining itself within an open-ended historical order. His concern with communal order is focussed on the order of the Church as a faithful and worshipping community awaiting its own experience of resurrection, rather than on the church's relationship to a larger ecumene.

5. Agape and The Form of Beauty

At Mk 12:18-21 the author quotes part of the servant song from Isaiah 42; at 1 Peter 22-25 the theme of the suffering servant is developed from Isaiah 53. Whether Jesus identified himself with the servant, or whether this

identification was an act of the early Church, the form of the suffering servant as a figure of redemption was quickly assimilated to the perceived form of Jesus' death as a redemptive sacrifice. The Isaiah hymn has the following lines which, though not quoted in New Testament reflection,

> can be taken as implicit to it:
> he had no beauty, no majesty to
> draw our eyes;
> no grace to make us delight in him;
> his form, disfigured, lost all the
> likeness of a man
> his beauty changed beyond
> human semblance.
> He was despised, he shrank from
> the sight of men,
> tormented and humbled by
> suffering;
> we despised him, we held him of
> no accout,
> a thing from which men turn
> away their eyes. Isa. 52:2-3. [24]

It is impossible now to get to these words fresh, beyond the layers of theological and liturgical reflection resting on them; we will however try to get close enough to focus the particular theological vision of beauty at work in the New Testament in relation to agape, and its contrast with the Platonic vision of to kalon linked with eros. For New Testament writers beauty is known specifically in the manifestation of the glory of god, evident in the workd and teaching of Jesus in general, and in his death and resurrection in particular:

> So the Word became flesh; he came to dwell among us,
> and we saw his glory, such glory as befits the
> Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. John
> 1.14. [25]

As John presents it, the beauty of agape that is evident in Jesus is a hidden beauty that becomes manifest

in stages as the significance of Jesus' work and teaching is recognised: there is thus here a notion comparable to the Platonic dialectic, a progressive unveiling of a value that founds all values. To call it an unveiling, though, requires some qualification. The Platonic journey is towards the light: even if to kalon is hidden in the form of Socrates, the ascent towards transcendence is a movement of increased transparency until finally the last veil obscuring direct intuition is removed. Here the journey is intellectual, empowered by eros. The New Testament journey has a different metaphorical structure: in its strictest sense it is a movement of faith towards an encounter with divine agape at the heart of darkness. As the first christians reflected on the promised form of the Saviour evident in the Hebrew scriptures, they had to deal with the fact that the one whom they called Christ bore little of the trappings - particularly in his criminal's death - of the manifest worldly glory associated with the Messiah. It is in reflection on the death of Jesus that the notion of God's hidden beauty, and thence the hidden beauty of the world in general, become focussed.

This beauty is shared with those who are faithful to Jesus: the story of the transfiguration on Mount Tabor records the manifestation of divine beauty to a select number of companions. Conversely, the disciples on the road to Emmaus can fail to recognise the divine in the human figure accompanying them. The concealment of beauty

is given as something deliberately chosen: the story of the temptation of Jesus illustrates how the option for overt manifestation of the divine through worldly power is a considered and rejected option. This choice nonetheless leaves a measure of ambiguity around the stress on miracles: those miracles that are acts of healing can certainly be read as expressions of love not power, but precisely as miracles it is power that they manifest. Any such use of power is however carefully circumscribed. The focus on the miracles in the gospel narratives is on their occurrence in response to need, and in John's account miracle stories are structured into a gospel of signs within which the incarnation of divine agape is progressively shown.

We have here a strong interlinking of love, power and beauty. We might note, though, that in the gospel narratives the power of Jesus is never manifest to the detriment of an individual's freedom to reject or accept what it brings, although that situation becomes more complex in relation to the overwhelming vision of Christ which was Paul's, where the sudden radical transformation of an individual life is reckoned to be the direct result of divine intervention. Even if now we would substitute a religious psychology for Paul's theological interpretation of his conversion, the experience that he focusses - of being radically overwhelmed by love, instead of being gradually led to an understanding of it - presents us with an important occasion for drawing out some of the further

features of agape in its relations to power and beauty [26].

(i) Beauty, Rapture and Economy.

The beginning of the erotic journey in Plato constitutes a moment of rapture that is repeated on different levels as one passes through different forms of enchantment, but that opens also onto a progressively structured economy of noesis. In trying to curb the unpredictable passion focussed in tragedy - the experience of intense disorder that destroyed any economy of individual and social life - Plato presents an account of the attainment of virtue that constitutes a gradual perfectionism comparable to the form of perfectionism argued by Confucius. As Christian writers such as Matthew looked back on Jewish history, they too read the sum of experience recorded in the Hebrew scriptures as an account of divine pedagogy: God gave the Law progressively, in order to draw the Jewish community closer to him, both in relationship and as an image of his perfection. In the gospels also we have seen Jesus awakening faith in himself and his work in a gradual, cumulative manner. Paul, however, presents a different kind of situation: divine agape is something that overwhelms and shatters, that dispenses with the pedagogy and constraints of the Law, that opens the heart directly in relation to the neighbour, that makes faith not so much a journey towards understanding as a radical conviction about what has already occurred, and that lifts the

individual out of his ordinary life in expectation of the imminent transformation of the parousia. It can perhaps be questioned whether the ecstatic experience of agape that is at work here ever, in Paul's teaching, received its inscription in an economy of virtue comparable to Plato's inscription of eros [27].

The experience of eros, at any stage, is given as a pull towards the other as the source of one's own completion; the completion of the other (as a person), whilst not ignored in this, is more a secondary consequence of that individual fulfilment which the other occasions. Beauty here is the charm that awakens love. The experience of agape is of being loved in such a way - to the innermost recesses of one's heart, beyond any darkness that can be named as sin - that one finds oneself radically beautiful, participating in the glory of Christ, and finding that beauty manifest also in all others. Agape is known first, though, as an experience of beauty conferred rather than sought. Agape renders one free and equal to others (pace Nietzsche), not seeking in the other the occasion of one's own completion. In one sense the starting-point of agape, as least as Paul understands it, is comparable to the end-point of to kalon (as Form) as Plato presents it (acknowledging the progressive induction to agape put forward by Jesus).

Plato's world transfigured by to kalon is one of manifest intellectual beauty, cosmos and society both

resplendent in their intellectual foundations; it is a beauty of the ruling function. Paul's world transfigured through agape is one which, previously a scene of radical conflict between God and human sinfulness, now constitutes a cosmic and social order that is read both as a manifestation of love and as a process that, in the Resurrection of Christ,has achieved its essential perfection. Insofar as this vision of agape is rooted in the brutal death of a particular individual, and finds in suffering its point of departure, the tendency is always not only to see beauty where it might otherwise be thought hidden, but even further to locate beauty at the heart of what appears most repellent. Given these general structures and tendencies, beauty can have a quite different location within Platonic and New Testament intentionalities respectively. Socrates discusses eros over a drinking party with free Athenian males; Jesus eats with publicans and sinners and separates himself from the political and cultural elite. Socrates educates young men of power and influence; Jesus teaches and heals those who are poor and suffering. Socrates speaks of the beauty of political institutions, Jesus of the basileia of God that seems to disrupt any political order. Whether or not these contrasts amount to conflicting intentionalities can only be dealt with after a detour through two further topics.

6. Agape. Nature and History.

Commenting on one aspect of the spirituality of the early Church, John Zizioulas remarks:

> Unlike the Greek and pagan religions of that time, the Church's outlook was not cosmological but historical; it was based not on the observation of nature (seasons, cyclical movements of stars, etc). but on events...Humanity's relation with God did not pass through nature but through obedience to the will of God, a fact that gave to Christian spirituality an ethical character...and a strongly personalist dimension.
> McGinn and Meyendorff, 1986:23.

It is well to introduce certain qualifications here. Homelessness and exile were recognised as essential aspects of Hebrew experience: their centrality ruptured any sense of the transcendent as the power of locale, and robbed the divinities of place of any particular significance. Yahweh transcended the cosmos and hence transcended any particular location: experience on this point differed from more general Mesopotamian experience of transcendence, where Marduk for instance remained figured as a god within the cosmos. The attraction of place remained, however, and one feature of prophetic exhortation is its attack on the seductive power of the baals, the divinities of the earth [28] . Insofar as the world is a locus of transcendence in the Hebrew scriptures, it is as an item interpreted through Torah and hence known in its relations to Yahweh. In writings such as the psalms in particular the world <u>is</u> known as a cosmological order, but one which issues from the creative will of the one God and in its regular laws reflect his glory. On Paul's reading, part of the bondage of sin lies in being given over to the principalities and powers of the cosmos, that is, in experiencing one's worldly life to be governed by multiple and arbitrary cosmic forces that are not seen as subordinate to the will

of God. Christian freedom is to know a single power of agape that orders all: sin by contrast is the acceptance of one's lot in a variously empowered universe.

Hebrew experience was of a God manifest in particular actions that were constitutive of the life of the community. History was not an experience of thrownness, nor of fate, nor of endless meaningless events: it was an experience of order and salvation within time over generations. Confucius, too, viewed history in the same way, and Zhu Xi: the way of heaven and the daotong were not manifest in the sum total of events past, but in a selective order that required a special telling if it were to become clear. Thucydides had a similar experience: history was not a random concatenation of occurrences but a logos, a process that had a rational order which was tied in a particular way to the Athenian experience of empire [29] . Considered against this broader background, the Hebrew reading of history which the church inherited is one instance of a transition from cosmological order to historical order which was figured in different ways in different contexts; while some would claim that the Hebrew experience of a God active in history is the most powerful known description of significance to history, we would need to consider the point more fully in a comparative context before subscribing to such a judgement [30].

If for the early Christians divine agape is known in particular through the event of Jesus' death and

resurrection, the status of the cosmos as a scene of agape is affirmed nonetheless: we have, for instance, seen Jesus' imaging of the presence and processes of the basileia in the operations of nature, while Paul speaks of the cosmos giving birth to a new form of life in consequence of the workd of Jesus, and emphasises that the cosmos is a single order expressive of the power of God. This reading of nature is not, however, central, and the development of a Christian account of nature was a matter more for post-apostolic writers [31] ; the focus on the scriptural traditions is on the significance of agape in the life of the community, and on the relations between God and history that Jesus disclosed.

7. Agape, Community and History.

The Hebrew sense of being a chosen community standing in a privileged relation with God is taken up and intensified in early Christian reflection; within this, the primacy of the community as the locus of agape and salvation is stressed - thus Zizioulas:

> Unlike other nonbiblical forms of spirituality, which could be understood individualistically, Christian spirituality was ecclesial in its nature. The church was not a means by which one would become spiritual in the sense that it provided the necessary instruction, worship, grace etc. for such a purpose. The church was a set of relationships, which provided one with a new identity, different from the identity given by natural birth or society. op. cit. p28.

We mentioned briefly in the last chapter the intense individualism that is focussed in the Plotinian ascent of

eros, reckoned as "the flight of the alone to the alone". It may well be asked, though, to what extent and in what senses nonbiblical forms of spirituality more generally are understood individualistically. To put the point simply, how far, in those contexts where the individual apparently does stand at the centre of a structured spirituality, should this spirituality be read as having an individualist bias, or as constituting instead a way whereby the individual might achieve a new sense and practice of community? Again, to resume the theme mentioned a number of times already: Socrates returns to, remains active in, the Athenian community after his experience of the daimon, and chooses death in Athens rather than life in exile. For Plato, as for Confucius, "the identity given by...society" is as such a spiritual identity when understood and pursued in its ideal sense. Society is the given form within which a fulfilled existence might be achieved, and in the transcendent symbolisation of political order that order itself images the principles of perfection.

Our attention here, then, is on the particular forms of imagery and reflection in the Christian scriptures within which the ecclesia as a community of agape is interpreted. [I move fairly freely across different writings in order to bring out some leading features of the thinking on community. A more extended critical approach would deal with the specificity of the writings in their address to particular groups, and in their temporal location within a developing Christian reflection. For Aquinas and medieval

writers, however, the scriptures in general were given equal consideration as divine revelation, and our treatment of imagery and ideas here will thus, in its method, move towards part of the approach of Aquinas. The importance of a holistic approach to the form and intentionality of scriptural tradition has also been emphasised by a number of recent writers.]

For John the transition from death to life is marked by the capacity to love those in the Christian community. The church is a brotherhood or fellowship of persons united n acknowledging God as father [Jesus' use of abba as a term for God had marked an utmost sense of trust and intimacy, characteristics which now governed the church's relations with God]. God is known as love, and the closeness of the relation with him is put metaphorically in the language of immediacy: "he who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him"Jn. 4:16. While the relation with God is mediated through the community, it is immediate to the individual as the utmost presence, internal, a closeness to self that is the radical antithesis of the closedness to self known as sin. This closeness is also a form of transparency, a life governed by light rather than darkness 1 Jn 1:5-7.

The language of intimacy is elsewhere developed through the strongest of physical metaphors: the church is a body with Christ as its head, the church is a bride with Christ as the bridegroom. In the latter instance, even if

marriage is spoken of as a process of two becoming one flesh, it is not the sexual or erotic aspect of love that is at work through the metaphor, but rather the linking of the transcendent with the human through a network of virtues and social practice. This operates at different levels. Firstly there is a doctrine of signs: the institution of marriage has its validity not primarily as a manifestation of love between two persons, but as a manifestation, through the form of that love, of Christ's love for the church. Secondly, there is a presumption of hierarchy: the husband has status and charge over his wife as Christ has over the church. Thirdly there is an assumption that the church already constitutes part of the order of transcendence. Whilst we have mentioned the contract between God and the world, figured through a doctrine of creation, as a specific siting of transcendence within the Hebrew tradition, and its difference from Confucian approaches to transcendence, one central feature of that tradition and of the Christian scriptures is the contrast not between God and the world but between God and sin. To be part of the Church - ritually to have passed through baptism and to participate in the eucharist - is thus already to be part of an order of transcendence that will receive its completion in a finally resurrected life.

Existence in the church is, through this kind of imagery, established as a central manifestation of divine agape, a continued manifestation in the lives of church

members of all that was known through the death of Jesus. The church here has a passive feminine function in relation to Christ; the value of that femininity is however something that is not its own possession, but rather given to it by Christ: Christ himself prepares the bride for marriage, Christ creates that beauty in the Church whereby he himself is then attracted to it. In one sense this could be read as a form of divine narcissism: only by making the church in his own image can Christ love it - the church is not loved in its otherness, but only as an extension of the same. At the same time this way of perceiving the church robs it of any active function. In the Song of Songs the bride prepares herself for the bridegroom. And in the erotic imagery of Chu Shamanism the shaman dresses and perfumes herself in order to woo the god. While there is some such imagery at work in later Christian nuptial mysticism, it is not a feature of the Christian scriptural tradition.

(i) Individual and Community.

We have remarked already the irruptive force with which Paul experienced divine agape; the vast flow of metaphor at work in his writings evidences his attempt to render stable an experience which could be disruptive of any continuing human existence. Paul's use of the corporate body and marriage themes constitutes a specific style of construing stability, though his vision of the institution of marriage as a permssible matrix for the expression of desire -

desire being construed as a form of weakness - marks an ambivalence towards that institution which bore profound consequences for later Christian thinking. Insofar as he considered himself to be living near the end of time, Paul saw in the practice of voluntary celibacy a signal and a wish that the world-process of creation and procreation might be brought to an end. The influence of this notion on monastic and clerical practice will detain us in the next chapter, but we might conclude here by considering the end-of-the-world theology at work in Paul's writing, and the bearing this had on agape in the context of individual and community ethics.

Paul presents to the Corinthians his sense of mystery;

> we shall not all die, but we shall be changed in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet-call. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will rise immortal, and we shall be changed. This perishable being must be clothed with the imperishable, what is mortal must be clothed with immortality.. 1. Cor.15:51-53.

Plato saw the soul's structure as an orientation and active inclination towards transcendence, a layer of eternity within the cycles of transience; yet his awareness of how the eternal might more generally become manifest in the temporal as <u>to kalon</u> and <u>to agathon</u> led him to stress the importance of perfection in life, rather than flight from life to a perfection in the beyond. This existence in <u>metaxu</u> is for instance focussed in Diotima's speech in the Symposium, where <u>eros</u> is presented as occupying a middle ground between riches and poverty, knowledge and ignorance, gods and men. Individual and civic life should ideally

constitute a participation in the divine reality of th Forms, and in its existential coloration this life is partly known as a being towards death, the beyond of death in turn identified through myth as the fully realised locus of eternal existence.

Paul tolerates the tension of life towards death, transience towards permanence, ignorance towards the unknown beyond, to a far less degree than Plato. His sole and overwhelming desire is to be with Christ: although not named as such, in its ecstatic urgency - an urgency that wishes now to experience fully the form of the resurrected life - this desire which grows from the agapeic experience of being loved by God is a more intense eros than the Platonic. The apocalyptic element in it, the wished-for moment of the lightning-flash when the perishable will become imperishable, entails that much in the Pauline ethic is geared to the expectation of a radically new existence.

The communities to whom Paul writes wait for the second coming of Christ - Paul's prayer is that this might be soon. The famous paean to agape in 1.Cor.13 achieves part of its intensity from location within this horizon of expectancy. Preceded by a detailed account of the church as constituting one body in Christ, the reading of the qualities of agape focusses the virtues appropriate to a community of persons living a changed life and expecting its imminent fulfiment. The three primary qualities of life Paul considers marked by permanence - faith, hope, agape,

with agape as the greatest, 1.Cor.13:13 - are three qualities geared to a proximate end of things: faith that Christ has changed the given order of the world and that he will come again, hope that his coming will be soon, agape as the bond uniting a community that has already been lifted out of a worldly (sinful) existence to anticipate the permanent union of the resurrection.

The specific attributes of agape which Paul names are ones which work to build the life of the community. Agape is superior to the ecstatic gift of speaking in tongue, to prophecy, to giving one's goods to the poor (1 Cor:1-3) - valuable as these qualities might be, they do not necessarily build community. Positively, the patience, kindness, truthfulness and permanence associated with agape are what sustain and fortify the community life. Although this community is not considered to be one living "under the law", the life-style which governs it is in part drawn from received Jewish practice: agape here is at once tolerant of hierarchy, as of the exclusion of women from a leading role in the community.

CHAPTER 9

CARITAS IN THE THOUGHT OF AQUINAS

To go directly from Paul to Aquinas; to traverse without comment more than a millennium of philosophical and religious thought in the West; to attempt to read Aquinas in his bearing towards us, rather than as the inscription of his own past - to proceed thus would be to miss the layers of formation that are both latent and manifest in a text such as the Summa Theologiae. Yet to question that formation, to interrogate all the shifts whereby eros and agape became fused as caritas, to examine the structure of neo-Platonism at work through Augustine and pseudo-Dionysius in the writing of Aquinas, and to note the routes of its linkage with Aristotelian metaphysics - to proceed with these questions alone would hold us indefinitely from a reading of caritas as Aquinas came finally to determine it. Caught in such a manner, all we can do here is approach the text of the Summa Theologiae direct, exploring its formative traditions as we examine the outworking there of caritas. Our focus will be on the articles on caritas in S.Th.2a2ae, 23ff, and on the Disputed Question De Caritate.

1. Caritas as Friendship

Aquinas begins by questioning whether caritas is a form

of friendship - utrum caritas sit amicitia [1] . The philosophical framework first established is drawn from Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics, where the virtue of friendship is discussed in Books 8 and 9. Following the standard procedure, Aquinas raises three objections to the point he intends finally to support, turning the argument at the mid-point of the article with the sed contra; the move here is heuristic in that the way the objections are formulated serves to open up central aspects of the final position. The introduction of Aristotle might be read in different ways. At first it could seem that the Philosopher is brought in only in order that his distance from Christian theology might be marked. Aristotle's account of amicitia (philia) is seemingly separated from caritas on three counts. Aristotle speaks of friendship as a dwelling together with one's friend (convivere amico 2a2ae 23, 1; ouden gar houtos esti philou hos to suzen, N.E. 1157b19), whereas caritas, transcending the relations between persons marks the relationship with god; he speaks of friendship as entailing mutual love (non sine reamatione, ad 2; gar estin antiphilesis ou lanthanousa, hoi de philountes allelous boulontai t'agatha allelois taute he(i) philousin, 1156 a 8-10), whereas the gospel precept is to love one's enemies (diligite inimicos vestros) - caritas thus transcends reciprocity; and he speaks of three kinds of friendship, based on utility (amicitia utilis), pleasure (amicitia delectabilis) and worth (amicitia honesti) [tria de tes philias eide...dia te

chresimou...di'hedonen...teleia d'estin he ton agathon philia kai kat' areten homoion, 1156a 7-b8], whereas caritas is none of, or more than, these three. If part of Aristotle is used in this way to focus the specificity of caritas, the point is certainly not yet a reading of Aristotle whole in order to circumscribe his value; it is more an extension of christian thinking via a passage through the Aristotelian matrix. And it is Aristotle who is introduced again at the responsio in order to clarify the nature of amicitia, and thus substantiate Aquinas' argument (based on the Johannine text that followers of Christ have become friends of Christ) that caritas is friendship [2].

We might nonetheless note that caritas as a form of friendship between man and God (manifestum est quod caritas amicitia quaedam est hominis ad Deum) is a notion specifically excluded by Aristotle. Commenting on the degrees of proximity necessary for friendship, Aristotle removes from consideration friendships governed by a strong hierarchical principle, as of subjects in relation to a ruler or of lesser men in relation to those "who are outstandingly good or wise", remarking that "where there is a great gulf, as between God and man, friendship becomes impossible" [polu de choristhentos, hoion tou theou, ouketi (menei he philia) 1159a5]. Focussed here is a difference between the Aristotelian and the Christian God. Aristotle's God is an abstract principle, the prime mover governing an eternal universe, a principle of

self-sufficiency, a form of self-absorbed reflection (noesis noeseos). The God that Aquinas articulates is one known as creator and saviour, deliberately choosing an incarnation that makes friendship with the divine a human possibility, establishing in that incarnation a basis of equality that completes the love relationship already opened in the Hebrew scriptures.

This friendship with God that Aquinas situates at the heart of caritas, whilst culturally rooted in Judeo-Christian thinking, is not however without its support from the Platonic and neo-Platonist strands of Greek thought, as we shall consider below. Here, through Augustine, Aquinas preserves the Platonic sense of human life as a participation in that divine source from which it takes its origin; and while this Platonism does not strictly incorporate a theory of friendship with the divine - although there is affinity and connaturality - it does, prior to Aquinas, in Augustinian and Cistercian spirituality in particular, provide a framework within which a Christian theory of love and friendship with God might be set.

In the responsio Aquinas draws on Aristotle to distinguish between different kinds of love, in particular between amor amicitiae and amor concupiscentiae - the latter can be a simple desire for passive objects, entailing no element of reciprocal well-wishing (mutua benevolentia) or sharing (communicatio). Amor amicitiae,

however, does involve communicatio, and when communicatio has the form of fellowship with Christ then "amor...super hac communicatione fundatus est caritas". With communicatio Aquinas takes up the scriptural theme of koinonia, and opens his thinking towards the Pauline account of christian incorporation into the mystical body of Christ, predicating this in particular on the theme that man has a dual existence (duplex est hominis vita, ad.1): una quidem exterior secundum sensibilem et corporalem.. alia autem est vita hominis spiritualis secundum mentem - the latter aspect of the duality is the basis of conversatio with God. Here the Platonic and Aristotelian privileging of mind is fully at work: mind is the principle of identity (and eternity) at work in the life of each individual. Separating himself from the Averroist Aristotelianism represented in Paris by Siger of Brabant, according to which there was a single intellect common to all humanity, Aquinas made of the intellect an aspect of the individuating principle of each particular person; it is this which has a central part in that divine conversatio where each redeemed person, qua individual, has his or her place.

The contrast between inner and outer, mind and body, spirit and senses, allows Aquinas to remark that the perfection of caritas lies not in this life but in the homeland/fatherland, patria, that is entered at death [3] . Here the material world is left and the individual acquires

a spiritual body (already spoken of by Paul as the body of the resurrection). While Aquinas abandons a Platonic separation of soul and body in favour of that Aristotelian hylemorphism which recognises the soul as the form of the body, - and thus in one sense overcomes a dualism that would render matter as such a principle of fallenness and separation from the divine - he also changes Aristotle's reading of the soul as a form which perishes when the body perishes to one where the soul, as a given principle of immortality, comes finally to rest in a life of eternal beatitude or damnation; this makes the reading of the bodily and material a more complex affair, and we will need to consider later how far, for Aquinas, matter as such constitutes a force of resistance to the divine. Here we might simply note that the inwardness of the soul/mind oriented towards its divine patria allows, within material existence, a participation in divine caritas (ad.1).

On the question of friendship, reciprocity, and caritas (ad.2), Aquinas distinguishes between the relationship with a friend in and for himself (suiipsius), which is reciprocal, and the extension of that friendship to those connected with the friend (children, servants etc). Here the dependents of a friend can be loved even if they behave as enemies: et tanta potest esse dilectio amici, quod propter amicum amantur hi qui ad ipsum, pertinent etiam si nos offendant vel odiant. At work within this comment is a vision of the radical unity of the human and natural world insofar as it issues from God: existence as such is an

expression of divine caritas - God creates in order to share his love further - and even those who act as enemies owe their existence to God and are to be loved on account of God. The psychology of ethics is thus used to elucidate a theological vision, and also to further a vision of wholeness: it is not individuals as such in their relationship with God that Aquinas stresses - he thus corrects the excess towards which an earlier mysticism of love could tend - but individuals in their God-given relationship with each other and with all others [4] . The starting point in psychology constitutes a demonstration that the world as such is already interconnected in this way, that all parts have their place in a larger whole and are to be understood and related to in terms of the whole, and that this inherent wholeness of the natural order is something developed and perfected in caritas (a frequent remark with Aquinas is that God's grace does not destroy but perfects) [5] . It is not that Aquinas uses Aristotle as a teaching device, but rather that he deliberately accepts and builds upon Aristotle's vision of the wholeness of man and nature. Finally, in relation to the third objection, and in extension of the point just established, Aquinas counters the argument that Aristotle's three kinds of friendship all differ from caritas by remarking that caritas is a form of amicitia honesti (Aristotle's friendship rooted in arete and to agathon); precisely as such it is capable of extension to others who are not themselves honesti.

2 Classical Theories of Friendship

In order to elaborate further what is at stake, and what hidden, in the link thus made between caritas and amicitia we might briefly consider how those classical ideas of friendship on which Aquinas draws were articulated, and where they situated friendship in relation to other aspects of a moral life. We have remarked how Aquinas sets caritas in an inner mental space of divine conversatio, thus erasing any traces of social differentiation the term might have. His discourse is placed first in a world of essences: the essence of man in its relation with God, and the relations between men as premissed on an original equality of essence. It is in this essentialist light that he reads Aristotle's agathon and arete as honestus, where the term refers not so much to an aspect of social relations as of essential qualities. The social determinants of ethical terms are, however, far closer to the surface of the text of Aristotle (and Cicero) than this reading allows.

(i) Aristotle on philia

Already in speaking of philia Aristotle has a long heritage of reflection to draw on, together with a shift in the use of philia which he himself intensifies by partly veiling its received social usage so that it becomes valuable coin in his philosophical currency [6] . We have already remarked the deeply conflictual background to Greek culture, evident from the Homeric period onwards. Such

central Aristotelian ethical terms as agathon and arete show this burden of conflict, but the issue is much more sharply focussed and shaped with Homer. In the Iliad and the Odyssey the agathos is a warrior-chieftain in charge of his own household (oikos); arete constitutes the set of competetive skills he must acquire in order to secure his own and his household's survival in a world of competing agathoi; philos - and its associated terms philein and philotes - covers the area of things and persons he must rely on (partly thus including co-operative relationships) in order to secure his passage through conflict.

As an adjective governing various terms, Homeric philos appears at first not to be directly translatable: someone's own limbs can be said to be philoi, as can persons and objects, and current English lacks the semantic net that might focus the meaning in one word. One commentator remarks:

> We are not acutely conscious of possessing a limited stock of persons and things on whom our very existence depends. The Homeric agathos is; and it follows that his possession of them is of the utmost importance to him. I stress the word "possession." He has these persons and these things which he can employ to ensure his continued existence. These things are his own: all else is hostile or indifferent, and the possessive affection he feels for what is philon is based on the need and desire for self-preservation. Adkins, 1963:33

Whatever is philon exists in a passive relation; the verb philein governs the active expression of "concern" towards that which is judged to be philon, and in relation to persons "includes giving food, lodging, and protection

to transients" ibid p.36. The xeinos (guest stranger), who relies on the hospitality of an agathos, and who enters a relationship of philotes with his household only, not with the remainder of society, can only be judged philos if he is likely to philein in return, ie if he is of comparable status to the agathos, so that at some point he might return the benefits of hospitality. The structure of the philotes-relationship is thus governed by benefit and use. Philein

> is not, of course, an altruistic act. It makes, and is intended to make, the other person a philon object on whose help one can only rely when one needs it, perhaps at some distant future time if he is a philos from some distance, almost at once if he is a member of the same oikos. Philein is an act which creates or maintains a co-operative relationship; and it need not be accompanied by any friendly feeling at all ibid p. 36.

As a co-operative relationship, philotes also covers, for later generations, relations between members of oikoi whose forebears were once philoi to each other.

[What we have termed here a co-operative relationship should in fact be more strictly spoken of as selfish reciprocity, for central to it is the way in which each partner becomes philon to the other by showing a form of concern which has his own, rather than his partner's, benefit as the ultimate goal.]

We have already seen that Aristotle distinguishes three kinds of philia. Introducing that distinction he contends that not all things are the objects of philia (ou pan phileisthai), but only to phileton, which is so insofar as

it is judged to be good (agathon), pleasurable (hedu) or useful (chresimon) N.E. 1155b 18-19; he then questions whether chresimon is phileton as such, or only insofar as it is instrumental in securing agathon and hedone (di'hou ginetai agathon ti e hedone, 1155b 20). This also raises the question whether it is objective good that people seek (philousin) or good (as it appears) for them (e to hautois agathou 1155b 22).

Assuming the three forms of phileton, Aristotle goes on to note that a philesis for inanimate objects (ton apsuchon) does not constitute philia: here there is no return of affection (antiphilesis) nor any wish for the good of the object (boulesis ekeino agathou) one does not wish good (t'agatha) on wine , but only on a philon (to de philo), (1155b 27ff) [7]. Even wishing someone well (eunoia) does not, however, constitute "friendship": that term is reserved for the situation where there is reciprocal concern (eunoian gar en antipeponthosi philian einai 1155b 33-4); for one can have eunoia towards a person whom one has never seen, but whom one judges to be chresimon; and such a person can in turn have comparable eunoia on account of to chresimon; but two such persons could not be said to be friends, for friendship involves being concerned for the others' well-being for his own sake (ekeinou heneka, 1155b 31), not on account of what one might gain from him. Antipeponthosis, as antiphilesis, thus constitutes mutual concern for the other as other -

though we will need to see how far that notion can be pushed.

We might note two points. First, the ground here has shifted when compared with the contours of the Homeric world. Homer's agathos can have philesis with someone he has never seen, precisely on account of to chresimon: the notion of wishing the other well for his own sake simply does not arise. Aristotle seems to be claiming for friendship the un-Homeric quality of mutual affection (though "affection" will require qualification). And second, the case is more complicated than we have so far suggested. Aristotle remarks that, not only must friends wish each other well, each for the sake of the other, but also that someone must recognise he is held in esteem for his own sake if his relationship with the other is to constitute friendship: no matter how much I am regarded for my own sake, if I am not aware of this then the mutuality of friendship does not exist. With mutual goodwill existing and known friendship can then exist on the basis on to chresimon, to hedone, or to agathon, 1156a 4-5.

It is important to note that Aristotle is making no claim here for disinterested friendship: all friendship has some self-interest, a point that Aquinas holds strongly in his assimilation of Aristotle. And Aristotle is clear that wishing the other well for his own sake is quite compatible with friendship based on to chresimon. But we should consider then what possible conflict there might be between

these two notions; can we in fact combine other-regard and use-value? Two strategies are possible.

> 1. A cares for B because B is useful to A; and B cares for A because A is useful to B. Here there is reciprocity in use-value, but other-regard seems somewhat thin. A wishes that B might continue to flourish, but only because the flourishing of B benefits A; and vice versa. Other-regard constitutes a for form of self-regard mediated through the other.
>
> 2. A cares for B in his own right, and wishes for B those things that are useful for B; and B has a similar disposition towards A. Here the other-regard is high, focusssed on the chresimon for the other, but the grounds of friendship are inexplicable: if B is not in some sense chresimon to A (this was the Homeric ground for something becoming philon) then it is not obvious how A and B are drawn together in friendship at all. (It might be replied that they are so on account of hedone or agathon, but exactly the same difficulty arises if the formula is applied here: if A cares for B in his own right, wishing for him those things that are hedu or agatha for him, then how does A come to care for B in the first place, and why does he persist in so caring). (It could also be claimed that this further example is redundant since, despite Aristotle's earlier claim, agathon and hedone might be reduced to chresimon, and might simply constitute ways of identifying various of the more subtle or refined chresima; we will consider this later).

Despite the suggestion that the other be regarded for his own sake, the way that Aristotle proceeds to talk about friendship suggests that, for hedone and chresimon at least, the friend is loved for purely selfish reasons. He notes that those who love each other dia to chresimon precisely do not love each other on their own account as persons (ou kath' hautous philousin 1156a 11), but on account of the particular benefit they derive from each other; and the same holds for friendship based on hedone. Friendships of this sort are accidental (eudialutoi), and once the use- or pleasure-value dissolves the friendships

come to an end (ean gar meketi hedeis e chresimoi osi, pauontai philountes 1156 a 20-21). [On this conclusion, Adkins points out an inconsistency in Aristotle's earlier argument against the possibility of philia with wine, on the grounds that one cannot wish for the good of wine. That argument seemed to insist on some reciprocal concern for the other as other, whereas now the concern for the other is purely selfish. One thus has a formally identical relationship between philon for a person and for wine: one wishes that the person and the win be good (eg hedonen) in order that one might enjoy each for selfish reasons].

The final form of friendship - the form we have already seen Aquinas make important use of - allows us to draw out further implications in the account so far. Aristotle speaks of this as the completed or perfected form, teleia, a friendship between agathoi and based on a similarity of virtue (kai kat' areten homoion, 1156b 7-8). To speak of philia as teleia opens an important aspect of Aristotle's natural philosophy. In beginning the discourse on philia, Aristotle remarks that philia exists by nature, phusei: friendship seems to be naturally present (phusei t'enuparchein eoike) in the mutual bond between parent and child, and is similarly present in the bonds between animals and birds of the same species (ou monon en anthropois alla kai en ornisi kai tois pleistois ton zoon). Friendship thus has its roots in the natural order, but that order is for Aristotle teleological; it tends towards

a perfection [8] . The point we have now reached in the discussion, focussing on the question of teleia philia, is to do with that high ground of natural perfection that can be reached by man only.

That much said, it should be noted that the idea of teleological perfection can be read in at least two different ways, with different implications for our understanding of philia; and Aristotle seems to endorse both readings. In the de Generatione Animalium he apparently envisages a single form of philia developing through the relationships between animals, and coming to a perfection in the human sphere where philia is realised particularly in conjunction with phronesis. On this reading it would not seem appropriate to say that there are different forms of bonding relationship, each involving a philia, that these are manifest in different bird and animal species, and that each has its own particular perfection appropriate to each species. It seems rather that there is one telos for philia, and that that is achieved with man.

Against this reading, Aristotle specifically warns that it is mistaken to think that there is only one kind of friendship which can be read as possessing different degrees of development. (NE 1155b13). He therefore allows in principle that there might be different forms (eide) of philia, though he retains the notion that those forms might be hierarchically ordered: it is possible to have relations

of greater and lesser between things which are nonetheless of different form (dechetai gar to mallon kai to hetton kai ta hetera to eidei, 1155b 14-15). This allows him to order sequentially the forms of philia, as forms, that are evident in different species, just as it lets him rank the three forms of human philia.

Aristotle thus comes to the third form of human philia, teleia philia, with the assumption that it is superior to the other two; yet as he discusses it the grounds of its superiority begin to disappear. From what we have read so far, we would expect the friendship existing between agathoi who are similar kat'areten to consist of mutual well-wishing without regard to benefit or pleasure, and this is what is first suggested: agathoi wish each other good things, t'agatha, precisely as agathoi, and being philoi is in particular this wishing good things for the friend for his own sake (hoi de boulomenoi t'agatha tois philois ekeinon heneka malista philoi 1156b 9-10); friendship of this sort is based on essentials, not on any accidental qualities (ou kata suumbebekos 1156b 11); it is also rare.

The sort of agathoi that Aristotle has in mind here are absolutely, self-sufficiently so (haplos agathoi), and precisely in respect of being such they are maximally able to be of benefit (ophelimoi) and afford pleasure (hedeis) to each other [9]. It is at this point that the Homeric agathos makes his return, for we have suggested already how

an assurance of self-sufficiency was a necessary feature of survival in the Homeric world. The need for self-sufficiency does not preclude relationships based on use-value but, on the contrary, requires such relationships if self-sufficiency is to be maintained; and the agathos who wishes t'agatha on the other agathos is one who does so first of all in the assurance that he himself is agathos, and then in the knowledge that the possession of agatha by others is a necessary feature of his own continued well-being.

The structuring power of the facts of Greek social life warn against any simple reading of Aristotle's account of philia as descriptive of the essence of this particular form of human relationship (the fact that Aquinas reads this as an account of essences is an index of the consolidation of a metaphysical vision by the medieval period; and at the same time the Christian writer presumes a less competitive individualism as the governing horizon of the Aristotelian text). Aristotle says that teleia philia of the sort he describes is rare, and this can easily be read as an indicator of the difficulty of ethical accomplishment (a perhaps appropriate reading in a treatise on ethics). It can also be read, however, as a comment on the Athenian social scene, a remarking that those who possess the material resources and social status to be agathoi are few, and that those amongst them who manage to construct a network of co-operative relationships are fewer still.

If we return to our question of whether agathon and hedone might be reducible to chresimon, we can now establish why, from Aristotle's point of view, they are not. Clearly within a certain philosophical discourse such a reduction can be considered possible: Bentham's hedonic calculus operates on the assumption that different utilities might be measured against each other insofar as they provide different degrees of the same kind of pleasure, so that the analysis behind utilitarian choice is one of purely quantitative calculation; and we have seen also how, on one reading, Aristotle seems to be talking about a single kind of philia manifest to different degrees. His stress in the Ethics on three different, non-reducible kinds of philia is, however, an important one, not primarily insofar as it identifies three different kinds of moral intentionality, as that it specifies different social locations within which relations between individuals might occur. Here as we have seen the crucial distinction is between agathon on the one hand, and chresimon and hedone on the other. I take it, for instance, that it would be inconceivable to Aristotle that philia kat'arete might occur between slaves, metoikoi, or women: these might within their own groups share relationships based on reciprocal use- and pleasure-value but, lacking the qualifications to become agathoi, would not be able to have philia based on an exchange of agatha.

The specific social examples Aristotle gives when

speaking of his three philiai are ones which link constancy and unchangingness with to agathon, and flux and inconstancy with chresimon and hedone. Philiai involving use-value occur particularly between the elderly, or between those at other stages of life who are pursuing their own advantage, hosoi to sumpheron diokousin 1156a 26-7; they last for as long as the individuals are of use to each other, and then dissolve. I take it that the agathos does not act within this category of relationship (apart from entering into trade-relationships with foreigners, which last insofar as they bring him advantage 1156a 31) because he already possesses to sumpheron and can thus allow himself a superior distance from profitable concern. [While we have noted the use-value operative at the heart of Homeric philia, and preserved by Aristotle in philia kat'areten, we should note that its preservation is more as structuring form than as manifest, thematised content: Aristotle actually attempts to displace Homeric value into the two forms of philia he records as secondary, rather than acknowledge its force in philia kat'areten. In separating teleia arete from profit he also makes a similarly aristocratic move to that made by Mencius in the separation of ren from Mohist li (profit)]. Finally, philia based on use-value can often exclude pleasure altogether.

The young know the pleasure (hedone) of affection (pathos) and love (eros), and it is on this that their

philia is often based, but precisely insofar as pathos and eros are changeable then philia di'hedonen is subject to periodic, and perhaps frequent, reversal. Whilst Aristotle wishes to preserve hedone within philia kat'areten, it is the constancy of the final form of friendship that holds his consideration most. To take one's stand on hedone alone is to live in a world of flux. Aristotle's choice for constancy over flux is a choice not for the constancy of the Platonic Forms, but for that constancy within the flux of life which individuals (of a certain social group) can achieve as the final flowering of an innate natural tendency [10].

(ii) Cicero on Amicitia.

As a reader and translator of Greek philosophy, Cicero presents an account of amicitia which preserves much that we have already considered; amicitia is for him the privileged perfection of noble male relationships. Apart from the formative role his thought had for Augustine however, and for medieval monastic accounts of friendship, what is of particular interest here is the place that Cicero ascribes to sentiment and to the movement of the heart in his account of amicitia.

I mentioned earlier that Aristotle locates affection within philia - indeed, he seems to open this as the basic issue when, at the beginning of his discourse, he suggests that philia is the great mainstay of life in any circumstances, 1155a 3ff. We have already remarked,

though, that friendship with Homer is a matter of actions not sentiment, and it is not easy to determine what structure of sentiment and affection Aristotle does ascribe to philia, though the importance he attaches to hedone, in itself and as a moment in teleia philia, indicates that it has some place. [Hedone should not be too narrowly translated "pleasure" - the kind of conversational exchange in Plato's Symposium would constitute hedone, for instance; but at the same time the difficulty we found, in reading Plato, of shifting away from desire and self-interest bespeaks the problem of trying to locate a structure of warm, interpersonal affection in either Platonic or Aristotelian thought].

For Aristotle teleia philia incorporates trust (to pisteuein NE 1157a 22-3), and is characterised by the choice constantly to spend time together 1157b 19. The feeling of attachment is an affection, whereas friendship as such is a state (eoike d'he men philesis pathei, he de philia hexei, 1157b 28-9); teleia philia is exclusive, and in this like eros, in that one cannot have many friends at any one time, and it takes time furthermore before one can know someone well as a friend 1158b 10ff. In unequal relationships, as between father and son or husband and wife, the form of philia differs in each case, and from each side of the relationship 1158b 11ff. To be active in friendship (philein) rather than to be the object of another's friendship (phileisthai) is the mark of genuine philia - mothers, for instance, get joy from loving

(philein) their children 1159a 28 [11] . On the other hand, the foremost structure of concern seems to be in relation to self: some form of self-love is taken as primary, and the relations of philia that individuals might have with others are an extension and mediation of the concern with self (ta philika towards neighbours are derived from those towards self, ek ton pros heauton eleluthenai 1166a 1-2). The spoudaios (the man who is complete in arete) is a principle of complete self-sufficiency, and from that standpoint of completeness (he is integrated, homognomonei heauto, and desires with his entire soul, kata pasan ten psuchen 1166a 13-14) he acts in those ways that are to his own advantage 1166a 17ff; from this basis of self-interest the spoudaios finds in his philon another self (esti gar ho philos allos autos 1166a 31-2).

These themes partially open for us the affective world that Aristotle envisages; to consider it further here would hold us from other readings. What Aristotle says is not without its contradictions, but a key quality is undoubtedly that of self-sufficiency within community; and philia is situated within a life of individual flourishing (eudaimonia) where the fulfilment of human intellectual or theoretic capacities is taken as the highest goal. The solitude of intellection contemplation (theoria) thus stands above the affective bonds of community life.

The tone of Aristotle's descriptions and analysis veils

the affective sense; that veiling is entirely absent from Cicero's De Amicitia, where an affective warmth permeates the writing, spreading particularly from the Platonic form of anamnesis within which it occurs, as Cicero writes to Atticus recalling an occasion on which he heard from Scaevola a discourse on friendship which Scaevola had in turn heard from Laelius, Laelius himself having enjoyed a particularly noteworthy (maxime memorabilem, l. 36) friendship with Scipio Africanus; furthermore, it is as a friend that Cicero writes to Atticus, and their own shared relationship is as another writing hidden in the text, within which Atticus might recognise himself (legens te ipse cognosces l. 52).

The movement of thought lies in the shadow of death, near the wellspring of grief, for Scipio is not long dead and Laelius, etched first as a man of Stoic virtue, is known also not to have reduced his passions to nought but to possess still the warmth of humanitas. Beyond the shadow of death, moreover, there shines on this reminiscence the light of immortality, both through belief in the immortality of the soul, and through the fact of Scipio's earthly immortality, his achievement of success and virtue that would never be forgotten. And in this context the discourse identifies amicitia as the greatest of human achievements, the means by which one might live in the greatest harmony with nature (nihil est enim tam naturae aptum 5,10). The fulfilment of life lies in the mutual goodwill of friends (in amici mutua benevolentia

conquiescant 6.20), in the sweetness of sharing with another as with oneself (Quid dulcius quam habere, quicum omnia audeas sic loqui ut tecum? 6.20 - 22). From the great network of relationships that nature brings into being, amicitia exists as a special bond of affection, caritas, between two or a few people, 5.40 - 43; amicitia is thus a consensus (consensio) on all things, deepened by mutual goodwill and affection (cum benevolentia et caritate, 6.2). Born of nature, amicitia is a cosmic force that draws together in harmony whatever it is that moves 7.17ff. Even in the space of theatre, applause at the representation of acts of deep friendship is a response provoked in us by nature 7.24ff.

Insofar as springing from natura, amicitia does not constitute the completion of a lack (it is thus not based on need and use value) but represents rather an expression of the most fundamental form of things: as an aspect of amor, from which it derives linguistically, amicitia thus represents a natural fulness rather than indigence (a natura mihi videtur potius quam ab indigentia orta amicitia 8.17-18). [Hidden in the discourse here is Plato's reflection on eros as born of penury; Cicero presents a universe where this lack is a minimal feature, where natura represents the maternal womb of perfection from which all things flow]. The generosity expressed in friendship does not arrive out of a desire for recompense, but is the expression of an innate liberality (natura propensi ad

liberalitatem sumus 9.27-8). Amicitia is not to be reduced to the animal-form of pleasure-seeking (ad voluptatem, 9.30-1); and the affective concern of friendship thus arises from a nature (natura gigni sensum diligendi et benevolentiae caritatem 9.35-6) which is a normative foundation that excludes voluptas as an end in itself; because nature itself is constant (natura mutari non potest) then true friendships are everlasting (verae amicitiae sempiternae sunt 9.45). The desire to reduce friendship to utility is a form of cosmic perversity: to deny that amicitia is essentially the warmth and light of caritas is comparable to attempts to pluck the sun out of the heavens (solem enim e mundo tollere 13.25). In contrast with an extreme philosophy that would rid man of sentiment, reducing all virtue to the hardness of iron (virtutem duram et quasi ferream 13.45) Cicero argues for a concept of life which can praise amicitia as a soft and yielding quality (tenera atque tractabilis 13.46-7). [The hardness of iron here might remind us of Laozi, with his concern to reduce life to the formlessness of the uncarved block, though Laozi himself uses imagery of softness in referring to the flow of water, and speaks of the "softness" of compassion. But we did note the absence of growth metaphors in Laozi, in contrast with Mencius. And while Cicero does not speak specifically of growth, natura is for him a normative foundational principle of growth in virtue - just as for Aristotle philia springs from phusis].

It is certainly true that Cicero balances the rational

with the affective in his account of amicitia: at one point he wants to subject the force of sentiment, which draws individuals unwittingly into friendship, to the constraints of rational reflection. It is the case also that he presumes himself throughout to be talking about sentiments shared between men. Although women do constitute an example in terms of their maternal concern, this is presented as a lower function in contrast with the fulfilment of amicitia in the relations between free, active males dedicated to public service. Neither forms of relationship between women, nor between men and women, are examined as instances of amicitia, or reckoned to shed any light on our understanding of it. The incorporation of "soft" "feminine" characteristics in amicitia thus raises the problems of rhetorical strategy that we have already encountered with Daoism, where the "real" "historical" feminine is reduced to an aspect of the male psyche in the male text: the softness of the woman is of no interest here, other than as a male possession, and this strategy is at work time and again in the elaboration of the Christian texts.

3. From Agape to Caritas: Aspects of Christian Thinking.

We have already noticed with Cicero several of the terms that were to become crucial in the translation of Christianity from its Greek to its Latin expression: natura, amicitia, amor, caritas. Cicero's deployment of these terms in his own translation of Greek philosophical

terminology, as in his letters and writings more generally, provided a matrix of Latin value-expressions (some of them already established in Stoicism and many of them diffused throughout Roman culture), which constituted an established usage and framework of thinking for early Latin Christian writers and translators.

We remarked how Cicero links caritas with amicitia, both terms identifying an expression and flowering of natura. It was caritas that came to translate agape in the christian scriptures (amor in Latin generally capturing more of the force of Greek eros)[12]. We should note, however, that there are two aspects to Cicero's caritas. If De Amicitia focusses an apparently universalist side, then other of Cicero's writings concentrate on caritas and its derivatives in the frame of family and civic virtue; both aspects account for the complexity of Cicero's identity as devoted Roman citizen and universalist Stoic thinker. These aspects were definitely held in union, however, for it was part of Stoic thinking that the larger social order was an outgrowth of familial order. (Chrysippus, for instance, maintained that altruism was a natural inclination, having its origins in the familial inclination from which the first societies proceed. In this - in making the family itself part of the natural order - Stoics were in continuity with the thinking of Aristotle, though in sharp distinction from Plato).

Cicero acknowledges society to develop in a series of

concentric circles, a notion we have already encountered as a cultural ingredient in Confucian philosophy [13] . Marriage is the first order (prima societas in ipso conuigo); then the relation with children (proxima in liberis). At this stage the originating and unifying bond is referred to as amor; it is when the "natural" relationships extend further (to cover uncles, cousins, in-laws) that Cicero begins to speak not of amor, but of caritas and benevolentia. [We cannot follow this point here, but there are distinctions in Cicero's notion of natura that need consideration, particularly regarding the shift from amor to caritas. Natura here functions as a developing teleological principle in the same way that phusis does for Aristotle, and amor and caritas mark different phases in that development]. The state consists of a multiplication of families, and the bonds at work in it are caritas rei publicae and caritas patriae:

> Omnium societatum nulla est gravior, nulla carior quam ea, quae eum republica est unicuique nostrum. Cari sunt parentes, cari liberi, propinqui, familiares, sed omnes omnium caritates patria una complexa est. De Officiis 1,17.

It was one of the achievements of Augustine to shift from Roman civic virtue to the transcendent spiritual virtue of the Christian City of God, so that in his thinking the classical virtues took on a different dimension; and we encountered earlier one consequence of that shift for Aquinas: the Christian homeland (patria) is a transcendent heaven, and the caritas patriae, Cicero's deepest civic bond, becomes the transcendent fulfilment of all human

relationships.

(i) Caritas and the Growth of Spirituality

The relationship between caritas and civic virtue is an issue addressed by a number of early Christian criters - Tertullian, for example, is at pains to show that Christian life is not in conflict with Civic life. the strongly transcendental concern that marked christianity from its origins, however, entailed that much thinking and reflection on caritas was set within the context of spirituality rather than ethics, within the pursuit of a perfection that was reckoned to be profoundly other-worldly. Here the monastic context soon emerged as the privileged context within which a Christian life might be lived, and, even though he was for long teaching in Paris, it is still strongly in relation to the horizons of monastic thought that Aquinas' work is defined.

The rise of monasticism in the West is in parallel with its emergence in China (for the latter, this covers both the native development of neo-Daoist reclusiveness at the end of the Han, and the advent and flowering of Chinese Buddhist monasticism). Explanations of the phenomenon of monasticism and its place in religion - its function as a male preserve within a patriarchal order - might help us to uncover a deeper dynamic governing the emergence of forms of spirituality and disciplines of life within the monastic milieu, but any close reading of such issues exceeds our concern here. What I would note is that while common

structural principles may govern monasticism in different religious and cultural contexts, there is a specific intentionality within Christian monasticism that, for the medieval period at least, gave it a distinctive colour, and that is the privilege granted to virginity as an anticipation of life in the Kingdom of God. Here, the monastic order became an extension of that apocalyptic tendency already noted in the scriptural tradition, whereby an imminent end to the world-order was anticipated. The practice of virginity, the retreat from the procreative cycle of birth and rebirth, was seen as an actively willed choice to terminate the world-process, and to step from the world into an anticipation of transcendent perfection. Monastic life was seen as a foretaste of the perfection of heaven, and throughout the entire period that we are considering here the institution of marriage was given a profoundly secondary status [14].

The Platonic and neo-Platonist vision of the universe saw degrees of reality within a hierarchy of being. As Christian thinking came to redesign, recut and wear the garments of Greek and Latin thought, questions on the compatibility of scriptural and non-scriptural visions of the world came to the fore. We have already seen how Nygren stresses the radical difference between spiritual agape and Platonic eros; such, however, was not the common perception of the developing Christian community. And, while there were exceptions to this, the major formative thinkers used the philosophical resource positively within

a complex marriage of Greek and Hebraic traditions. We have noted how the Renaissance theme of a philosophia perennis identified a community of thinking between ancient philosophy and christian belief; for many of the Fathers this community was marked in the characterisation of philosophy as a praeparatio evangelii, a preparatory paideia for the divine truth of the gospel.

Within this context - and whether for Greek or Latin Christianity - eros and agape, eros, amor and caritas were used as terms to focus a single kind of love, which at times is characterised by differences in intensity. [Some writers speak of eros as a spiritually more intense form of agape [15]]. As we have seen, scriptural agape did not cover the idea of love for God, but rather the sense of being loved by God, with the corollary that love should then be shared with the community. Yet the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Songs - which came to be read as an account of the soul's loving search for God - and the eros-mysticism of Plato and Plotinus, jointly served to focus a christian spirituality where love for God had a primary importance. Here the practice of the virtues - much as the Buddhist practice of sila - served as a purification of the individual and a deepening of his capacity for love. [Though the virtues were no mere preliminaries, but constituted perfections themselves, and their attainment marked an anticipation of the perfection of interpersonal relationships in the Kingdom of Heaven].

At the same time the transformation of erotic love into spiritual love eventually involved a transfer of the language of inter-personal eroticism so that it came to characterise the individual's relationship with God or Christ.

The notion that there is a single form of love, and that love is the means of the soul's ascent to God, is focussed in Origen, for instance, when he reads the world as a symbol of spiritual reality where the soul penetrates the symbols to different degrees in its journey to Christ. Here he specifically states that different words for love designate the one substance:

> Nihil ergo interest in Scripturis divinis, utrum charitas dicatur, an amor vel dilectio.

Augustine similarly claims that amor, dilectio and caritas are used interchangeably. Love that is directed in an upward ascent to God is caritas; love that moves down towards the world is cupiditas; amor is neutral, becoming caritas when directed to the good, and cupiditas when focussed on evil. On the equivalence of amor, dilectio and caritas, and against the idea that amor marks an orientation to evil, he notes:

> nonnulli arbitrantur aliud erse dilectionem sive caritatem, aliud amorem. Dicunt enin dilectionen accipiendam esse in bono, amorem in malo. Sic autem nec ipsos auctores saecularium
> Dicunt enim dilectionem accipiendam esse in bono, amorem in malo. Sic autem nec ipsos auctores saecularium litterarum locutos esse certissimum est...Sed scripturas religionis nostrae, quarum auctoritatem ceteris
> omnibus litteris anteponimus, non aliud dicere amorem, aliud dilectionem vel caritatem, insinuandum fuit. De. civ. Dei 14,7.[17]

Pseudo-Dionysius, as we have seen, acknowledges a single love with different intensities. Love is first the movement within God whereby the universe comes into being,

and then that movement in man whereby he seeks his return to God through the different degrees of reality: aspects of the world form a hierarchical symbolism whereby the soul rises, and reality constitutes a flow of love from its divine source and back again. This style of thinking entails a contrast between a material world and a spiritual world, carrying this into distinctions between the inner man and the outer man, and between the inner and outer meanings of scripture: to perceive the inner meaning requires a specific, spiritual hermeneutic, and the scriptural text can at times take the form of a riddle designed to waken spiritual insight (this understanding of scripture has obvious affinities with the Zen understanding of koans).

(ii) Two Forms of Love

While Augustine and pseudo-Dionysius emphasise the fact that love has a single form with differing intensities, other writers seem to favour a radical contrast between two forms of love. This contrast (identified by some commentators as between a 'physical' and an 'ecstatic' conception of love) is rooted in the classical period, though not fuly focussed there, and involves a contrast between *eros*, as a love that seeks the self's fulfilment, and *philia*, as a disinterested concern for the well-being of the other [18]. [We have remarked Aristotle's ambivalence on the separability of *philia* from self-love;

Cicero, however, is stronger on disinterestedness and this, combined with the way that Aristotle came to be read in the medieval period, consolidated a Christian belief that disinterested love - of God in particular - was not only possible, but marked the highest conceivable expression of love. It would be impossible to cover fully here the psychological and cultural factors that gave rise to the idea of disinterested love - the twelfth century renaissance with its new appreciation of Cicero was one such; the troubadour doctrine of fin'amors (pure love) which, although directed to an idealised woman, perhaps carried overtones of the sufi doctrine of annihilation of self in love of God, also played a part (and also requires its own explanation); the emergence of a humanist culture that was rich enough to move away from need-relationships was a factor; and so also was the need of the monastic world - Cistercian in particular - to provide a new interpretation of Christian love that was richer than the secular versions increasingly available.[19]]

Heloise and Abelard, each in a somewhat different way, focus the contrasts between selfish and unselfish love. A line from Cicero's De Inventione rhetorica bore particular significance for Abelard, and for followers in his school; it characterised a strongly other-directed friendship:

> Amicitia est voluntas erga aliquem rerum bonarum, illius ipsius causa, quem diligit, cum ejus pari voluntae.

Caritas constitutes now a love of God for his own sake, and Abelard claims that this is the force of the New Testament

teaching on love: caritas is more akin to unselfish human friendship (philia) than to self-centred love (eros). [We should note that Abelard's caritas in its turn differs also from what we noticed in the scriptural account of agape: there it was God's love for man; now it is man's disinterested love for God][20]. Whatever other factors focussed Abelard's thinking here, the love he received from Heloise was of prime importance; a relationship governed powerfully by passion on his side, it was governed on hers by a concern for his well-being as a leading thinker of the age. There is however a double irony here, for while Abelard could find a philia with God but not with Heloise, Heloise masked in her love for Abelard a need which she felt he alone, not God, could fill; for each of them the language of disinterest bears the mark of self-deception.

Bernard of Clairvaux, opponent of Abelard on other issues, shares with him that reading of love as a movement beyond self-concern, as a passage towards God in which the individual transcends and loses self. In the De Diligendo Deo he distinguishes four stages in the ascent of love: first, man loves himself for his own sake; then he loves God for his (man's) sake; then loves God for God's sake; and finally loves self again for God's sake. It is impossible to appreciate fully what is at work here without a passage through the rhetoric of Bernard's love-mysticism, and rather than offer that I will below provide such a reading of Aelred of Rievaulx's account of spiritual

friendship.

On the notion of love as concern with self, though, all I would note is that Bernard really seems to be talking about a transition from Aristotle's chresimon to hedone: love based on self-interest is based on a (perhaps crude and manifest) awareness of personal inadequacy, whereas love of God for Himself rests on the pleasure of divine conversatio, as the individual engages in those religious and spiritual disciplines that open him to a sense of the divine. In the imagery of the Song of Songs, that conversatio is put in the context of a spiritual marriage between the soul and God, and the intensity of erotic transport becomes a figure for the blissful loss of self-awareness that can occur within deeply prayerful and meditative practice.

The friendship with God that Bernard sets at the heart of caritas is a friendship also with his fellow men - men in particular, since his was an all-male community; men of a particular sort, since many amongst the Cistercians would have been Crusaders, used to an all male fraternity and doubtless part-nourished in their campaigns on the intense, restrained eroticism of the troubadours [21] . Bernard is content to transfer the intensity of his love to his fellow monks - a love which he would characterise as "in Christ", and thus geared solely to the well-being of the other. It is found, for instance, in the feeling with which he tries to persuade a monk to return to the monastery:

> I am not writing in order to contend, but to end contention...I pass over what has happened; I do not ask how or why it happened. I do not discuss faults, I do not dispute as to the circumstances, I have no memory for injuries. I speak only what is in my heart. Wretched me, that I lack you, that I do not see you, that I am living without you. To die for you would be to live; to live without you is to die. I do not ask why you have gone away; I complain only that you do not return. Come, and there will be peace; return, and all will be made good.

(iii) Aelred on Spiritual Friendship

In the prologue to the De Spiritali Amicitia Aelred acknowledges his original indebtedness to Cicero, only proceeding to remark that, the more familiar he became with Christian writings, the less inspiration he gained from him. Cicero nonetheless served as a certain model, insofar as Aelred decided, in the absence of a specific Christian treatise on friendship, to produce one where the Roman exemplars of virtue were replaced by Christian and biblical figures; and he is more than model insofar as the Stoic's language and categories keep breaking through the Christian's text. Aelred's avowed departure from Cicero into a world of Christian experience serves in a way as a metaphor for the kind of break between different forms of love that the ecstatic conception favoured over the physical, though we should not press that contrast too far with Aelred since he views the ecstasy of friendship as a perfection of the natural order, in a sense continuous with it, and the stress on a pure, disinterested love is not a major feature of his text. Nonetheless, the context for disinterested love is there in reflection on the relation with God (marked by pleasurable intimacy, not need) and on

the shared existence with others "in Christ".

Aelred begins by reducing the force of the Ciceronian text:

> it is evident that Tullius was unacquainted with the virtue of true friendship (Constat enim Tullium verae amicitiae ignorasse uirtutem) since he was completely unaware of its beginning and end, Christ. 1.8.

And in opening his conversation with Ivo he stresses 'that, in the intimacy of that conversation, Christ constitutes a third presence, 1.1. Intimacy is indeed a palpable quality throughout the discourse, and the writing at times represents a delicate holding and balancing of desire - thus an intensification of desire - on the edge of fulfilment, a restrained eroticism that locates disinterest in the intensity of pleasure without consummation. As appropriate to the intention of reciprocal pleasure, the writing takes the form not of a treatise given by one man to another (Ivo asks Aelred for instruction on friendship) - were it to be such, there would not be that equality on which true amicitia depends - but rather of a shared conversation whose purpose is a Heideggerian gelassenheit, a releasing of the constituent features of friendship as a Christian experience. The charm of Ivo, whom Aelred as known and watched closely, and the questions on friendship, open a path that both of them might follow: thus Aelred:

> For you yourself love opened the way for both of us, and have enkindled that brilliant light on the very threshold of our inquiry, which will not allow us to wander along unknown paths, but will lead us along the sure path to the certain goal of our proposed quest 1.9

The path thus opened, Cicero is no sooner dismissed than

called back again to provide the initial definition of friendship:

> Friendship is mutual harmony in affairs human and divine coupled with benevolence and charity. (Amicitia est rerum humanarum et divinarum cum benevolentia et caritate consensio) 1.11, De.Am. 20

With this text as a starting point, and with a stress placed on the classical criterion of everlastingness (amicitiam aeternam esse 1.21) Aelred proceeds to establish that true friendship is rarely evidenced outside the Christian community. Against Ivo's concern that friendship is in general difficult and rarely found, he remarks however on its relative frequency in the Christian world, linking this to the fact that the Christian can rely on divine grace to achieve perfection in virtue, 1.26-30.

Ivo's concern is specifically with spiritual friendship, and to bring that more fully into focus Aelred distinguishes three kinds of friendship: carnal friendship (amicitia carnalis), worldly friendship (amicitia mundialis) and spiritual friendship (amicitia spiritalis):

> The carnal springs from mutual harmony in vice; the worldly is enkindled by the hope of gain; and the spiritual is cemented by similarity of life, morals, and pursuits among the just 1.38

Spiritual friendship is characterised by the dignity of its nature (ex propriae naturae dignitate) and by the sentiment of the heart (humani pectoris sensu) (pectus here carrying more of the softness of sentiment that cor); the fruit of friendship's perfection is a feeling of sweetness (dulcedinem sentiendo 1.46). The particular structure of

sentiment that Aelred is beginning to establish here, set within a discipline of ethical cultivation, is one where spiritual friendship is finally known as a self-validating experience, and indeed as a perfection of human relationships. [There is also at times almost a sense in which it is superior to caritas: since caritas can be shown to enemies and does not imply reciprocity, 1.32, it does not entail the intimacy of an interpersonal bond that Aelred sets above all else. Elsewhere, though, Aelred holds that it is only through caritas that perfect friendship is possible].

Aelred sets the roots of friendship deep within the structures of nature as it issues from God:

> Suppose we begin with inanimate creation - what soil or what river produces one single stone of one kind? Or what forest bears but a single tree of a single kind? And so even in inanimate nature a certain love of companionship, so to speak, is apparent, since none of these exists alone but everything is created and thrives in a certain society with its own kind. 1/54.[22]

Animals and angels equally are united with their own kind in friendship; and insofar as woman was created from the very substance of man (de ipsius substantia masculi 1.57) human relationships are from the start fundamentally equal in nature, so providing the basis for true friendship. Nature itself thus originally established a desire for friendship and charity (natura mentibus humanis, ab ipso exordio amicitiae et caritatis impressit affectum), but with the fall of man and the cooling of charity (cum refrigiscente caritate) nature introduced contention

whereby individual benefit was set against the common good 1.50. From the moment of the fall a distinction between caritas and amicitia became important: it was stressed by the good (boni) that caritas be shown even to the wicked, whilst amicitia came by natural law (naturali lege) to be shared only between those few who were good (paucos bonos) - for them friendship rested in the grace of mutual charity (in mutuae caritatis gratia 1.59).

The conversation in Book 1 establishes something of the nature of spiritual friendship; Book 2 - where instead of Ivo, Walter and Gratian converse with Aelred - explores the qualities of friendship further; and not to lose the point, friendship is again confirmed as the highest of the stages leading to perfection (2.14-15). It is now that a transformed language of eroticism comes more directly to the fore. Persons bound together in friendship ascend through stages of love to a mystical encounter with Christ, where union with Christ is imaged in the experience of the soul's kiss:

> per amoris gradus ad Christi conscendens amicitiam, unus cum eo spiritus efficitur in osculo uno. 2.22

Aelred distinguishes three kinds of kiss, a physical, a spiritual and an intellectual:

> The physical kiss (osculum corporale) is made by the impression of the lips; the spiritual kiss (osculum spiritale) by the union of spirits; the intellectual kiss (osculum intellectuale) through the Spirit of God, by the infusion of grace (per Dei spiritum infusione gratirum) 2.24

It is with the spiritual and the intellectual kiss that he

is particularly concerned: with the shared psiritual intimacy between tso friends, and with the mediated sense the individual can have of union with Christ, and it is the imagery of the Song of Songs that is drawn upon here to carry the presentation [23]. It is clear that in this account Aelred is entering a complex discursive space with profound implications for the organisation of monastic life, and Walter shows his awareness of this by remarking that "we are trying to set up for ourselves a definite limit as to how far friendship ought to go" 2.29. True, Walter avoids putting the question of limits in terms of physical intimacy, but the placing of his question, and his reference to Gratian's over-friendly nature, indicate that this issue is just beneath the surface of the text. Gratian refers to their meeting as a spiritual banquet (spiritale convivium 2.17) and for us this opens the question of the organisation of homosexual desire within the Christian monastic community (and in the all-male communities of the crusaders) just as Plato's 'banquet'focussed the homosexual desire of the Greek world and set it in a philosophical framework. For Plato and for the Christian writer the issue concerns the management of eroticism, with its direction towards moral, spiritual and intellectual goals; and the preservation of the erotic tenor in the pursuit of these goals gives to the philosophical and monastic life a jouissance that thirsts for consummation and hovers at the brink of physical ecstasy (this less perhaps for Plato than for Aelred; since

for the latter the goal is not to become hard and gemlike, as Socrates, but soft and receptive, so that the dissolving haze of ecstasy is closer to his writing).

The structure of the discourse following Walter's question on limits has almost the character of a withdrawal, as the moral considerations surrounding friendship, and surrounding the choice of an appropriate friend, are brought more fully to the fore. Aelred does not offer the same intense mysticism as Bernard, and his placing of *amicitia* and *caritas* within the very foundations of nature is closer to the physical than the ecstatic conception of love. He does, however, strongly separate the reciprocal intensity of *amicitia* from other forms of *caritas* and *amor* (at one point he acknowledges that he loves and is loved by all the monks in the monastery, but holds that such love is not *amicitia*: *amicitia* is possible only with a few people, 3.82ff). There is thus a kind of break that occurs with *amicitia*, and even if there is a general ascent through love to God, *amicitia* marks a lift and intensification in the process (in this it is not unlike the *eros* of pseudo-Dionysius, which marks a more intense form of *agape*).

4. Aquinas and the Ascent of Being to God.

One way to view the ecstatic concept of love is to consider it premissed on the significance of the person, as an attempt to focus the intimacy and ravishment that can be known in interpersonal love, and to transfer that sense to

the experiential frame of a mysticism ordered to a God perceived as infinitely lovable. In part then we can view Bernard, Aelred, William of St. Thierry, Hugh of St. Victor and others as offering first of all a phenomenology of a certain type of mystical experience, structuring their reflection through the themes of the Song of Songs, the De Amicitia, and other writings, and attempting thus to focus both the process of desire and its fulfilment in a pleasure known as intimacy with Christ.

Aquinas holds strongly to a movement of desire as one pole of the order of the cosmos, a reditus in Deum of all Being insofar as it is marked first by its issuance, its exitus a Deo; indeed the whole structure of the Summa Theologiae is governed by the theme of the cyclical movement of being, its origin in and return to a Creator known as love; and in this movement created being is a mirroring of the eternal movement and rest with the processions of the Trinity. Love is the essence of the divine life first, and then the structuring form of a human life which is recognised as a participation in the divine[24].

Aquinas' philosophy of love is a full elaboration of the physical against the ecstatic conception. This is not to say that his philosophy is completely against the phenomenology of ecstatic experience; when he does write on love, however, it is to criticise the philosophical

presupposition according to which disinterested love or loss of self might be reckoned an ontological possibility, and in that critique thus to limit the place ascribed to the pursuit of intensity as a self-validating experience. At the same time he retains many of the Bernardine insights on love, but sets them within a more extended philosophical framework.

In part the ecstatic-physical contrast centres on the question whether one can transcend self-love in relation to another or to God; and its force is compounded by the identification of God as the summum bonum, that highest good which constitutes man's fulfilment, since if God is to be desired in what he represents for man then any love of God will be mediated through love of self. For Aquinas self-love is a premiss of any loving, not for psychological but for metaphysical reasons: the metaphysical orientation of all beings is towards God as their perfection, and all being is thus possessed of a teleological structure [25] . Here Aquinas draws on Aristotle's thought that all movement is a form of desire, ultimately desire for God; a text such as the following from the De Anima has a crucial significance:

> to de kinoun kai kinoumenon to orektikou (kineitai gar to kinoumenon he oregetai, kai he orexis tis extin he energeia)
> De Anima III 10,433b 16-18

(i) A Single Form of Love

Aquinas uses a rich terminology to cover different aspects of love and desire, and I will consider only

aspects of that here. The structure of desire as a universal search for perfection is clearly stated:

> Ultimus finis est beatitudo, quam omnes appetunt, ut Augustinus dicit. S.Th.1a2ae 1.8

And at the same point the issue is also established in relation to human desire: anything that is desired is desired not so much in itself, but rather insofar as it is a token of, carries a promise of, an ultimate perfection:

> Necesse est quod omnia quae homo appetit, appetat propter ultimum finem...ultimus finis hoc modo se habet in movendo appetitum, sicut se habet in aliis motionibus primum movens. Manifestum est autem quod causae secundae moventes non movent, nisi secundum quod moventur a primo movente; unde secunda appetibilia non movent appetitum nisi in ordine ad primum appetibile, quod est ultimus finis. S.Th.1a2ae 1.6

This orientation towards an ultimate end entails that, whatever is loved, even insofar as evil or destructive, is loved as a form of good; amor names any orientation towards the good:

> aliquid dicitur amari quod appetitus amantis se habet ad illud sicut ad suum bonum. Ipsa igitur habitudo vel coaptatio appetitus ad aliquid velut ad suum bonum amor vocatur...Unum quodque amamus inquantum est bonum nostrum. In.Div.Nom. 4.1.9.

Together with the universal desire for God that Aquinas unfolds here, there is also a strongly holistic reading of the universe. All beings are interlinked in a single network of being; truly to desire one's own good is to desire the good of the whole, of which one is a part, and to desire one's own proper functioning within the whole; the tendency towards God is a tendency towards others insofar as they bend towards God. With love and being

considered thus, the possibility of radical disinterest is sytematically excluded [26].

If it is thus excluded, it is nonetheless important to note that an attitude apparently very close to disinterest is included as a central feature of love; this is an attitude tied precisely to the tendency to favour the good of the whole over one's own apparent good or the good of any of the parts taken in isolation:

> To love God above all things, more than self, is natural not only to the angels and to man, but also to any creature insofar as it is capable of loving through either sense or nature (aut sensibiliter aut naturaliter). For natural inclinations (inclinationes naturalae) can be most clearly recognised in those (creatures) which act naturally without deliberation; since anything in nature acts according to its inborn capacity to act (sicut aptum natum est agi). We see that any part has a natural inclination to act for the good of the whole, even when it is in danger of disadvantage to itself (detrimento proprio) - this is evident, for instance, when someone fends off a sword with his hand in order to defend his head, on which the well-being of his whole body depends (ex quo dependet salus totius corporis). Thus it is natural that any part, in its own way, loves the whole more than itself. And so, on the basis of this natural inclination, and on the basis of civic virtue (politicam virtutem), a good citizen exposes himself to the danger of death for the common good. It is clear, however, that God is the common good (bonum commune) of the entire universe and of all its parts, so that any creature thus naturally loves God more than itself: anything insensate in a natural way, animals by means of their senses, rational creatures by means of that intellectual love (per intellectualem amorem) which is called dilectio. Quodl. 1 a.8

The kind of position outlined here can only be reconciled with earlier statements about desiring God as one's final end and perfection if it is acknowledged that the principle of love is twofold, that the self-perfective tendency is also an innate instinct to locate the good of the self

within the good of the whole, and that within any apparent conflict between the good of the self and of the whole, that of the whole is to be preferred insofar as, in some way, it always includes the greater good of the self[27]. It should also be noted that the possibility of this conclusion is for Aquinas strictly premissed on a theological principle that is more precisely Platonic than Aristotelian. For if it is from Aristotle that he draws a natural philosophy which stresses the interrelatedness of all parts within an organic whole, it is also from Aristotle that he knows of the dissolution of the individual form (soul) at the moment of death (although the form of the species is transmitted in the process of generation and procreation). It is from Plato, indirectly, that he draws the sense of a return of all things to their transcendent origin, and it is on this Platonic basis that any apparent loss occurred by the individual acting for the good of the whole is finally recuperated [28].

(ii) Love as an active or passive force.

The structure of love in the metaphysic of Aquinas has the form of the journey of Odysseus, an outward movement of love from the divine patria, a return through a process of self-fulfilment; for Levinas the circularity of movement here stands in betrayal of the true ethical imperative, the approach to the other as a moment of radical alterity which is also a refusal to view the other as an aspect of the same within the bonum commune.

As we have remarked, Aquinas sets *amor* within the life of God: *amor* identifies a kind of movement or appetite, will (*voluntas*) is in particular an appetite, and God is possessed of will (*ostensum est autum in Deo esse voluntatum* S.Th.1.20 Resp.). The identity of God in relation to the world, and the nature of God's relation to the world, is thus significantly different here from the identity and relations that Zhu Xi ascribes to *taiji* and the world. *Taiji* can indirectly be designated *ren*, insofar as *taiji* names the network of *li*, and *ren* is situated within *li*, but *ren* here is not an active force, nor can *taiji* be spoken of as active: *taiji* is the being of the world in its deepest foundations, not a creative originating force; *taiji* is stillness rather than movement; *taiji* is not possessed of intelligence and will which for Aquinas are two of the primary attributes of God.

While the language of *appetitus*, *desiderium* and *inclinatio* focusses the active tendency in love, Aquinas holds strongly also to a sense of love's passive moment, reflecting this in terms such as *formatio*, *informatio*, and *complacentia*. One argument is that, as Aquinas progressively absorbed Aristotle's thinking and terminology, the motif of active desire became a predominant one in his metaphysic, while the passive aspect of love can be seen in sharper characterisation in his early writings; against this it has been argued that reflections on the active and passive valencies of love

constitute two equal but unintegrated strands within his text as a whole. I do not intend to adjudicate this debate here, but rather to raise for consideration those passive features of love which we have not so far considered.

In some respects the passive is figured as a completion, a coming-to-rest of appetite in possession of, conformity to, the form of the desired object. Love here is essentially the transformation of the lover insofar as it takes on the form of the loved according to its capacity to receive that form. [I use the word "love" here to translate "amor" which is somewhat strained in relation to the usae of Aquinas, insofar as he intends by amor any kind of movement in any entity towards its end; I consider this below. As a principle and process of transformation amor is spoken of as a "virtus unitiva"

> quia est ipsa unio, vel nexus, vel transformatio qua amans in amatum transformatur, et quodammodo convertitur in ipsum. Vel dicendum quod quietatio affectus in aliquo, quam amor importat.
> In Sent.III d.27 q.1a.1 ad 2

The terms transformatio and quietatio convey the sense of rest as the end term of love - love here remains first and foremost an active principle; desire precedes formatio and tends towards it as its perfection. The notion that the lover in some sense (quodammodo) becomes what it loves is a powerful notion, excluding the possibility of any radical difference or divergence within the order of being. Indeed, the unity that is achieved in the transformatio is for Aquinas a certain reappropriation at the level of

individual existence of an original ontological unity within which all entities are aspects of the same: ens at unum convertuntur, though unity functions not as a univocal but as an analogical notion.

The quietatio that occurs in the transformation of amor is also apoken of as a certain kind of peace. Peace is not distinguished from love but is an aspect of love (pax non distinguitur ab amore, sed est aliquid amoris). Pax is a certain stilling of the appetite, (quietationem appetitus) whereas amor specifies its final transformation and conversion into what is loved (amor dicit ulterius transformationem, et quandam conversionem in amatum, In Sent.III d.27 q.1a3 ad 5). Amor is a more profound entry into a thing than knowledge (cognitio) (amor magis intrat ad rem, quam cognitio) - knowledge relates to something in terms of what the knower receives (cognitio est de re secundum id quod recipitur in cognoscente) whereas the relation of love is one where the lover is transformed into the thing itself (amor autem est de re, inquantum ipse amans in rem ipsam transformatur, In Sent III 3.27. q.1 a.4 ad 10).

The language of transformation leaves us here with an apparently absolute proximity to the language of loss of self in the mystiucal love literature. The transformation into what is loved, the entry into what is loved, the qualitative change in the lover insofar as it takes on the form of what is loved, all point to a change - which one

could view either as diminishment or enrichment by considering the nature of the object of love - whereby the lover might be reckoned to lose its own nature. It is worth considering how this early formulation of the issue compares with the ideas on amor presented in the Summa Theologiae, with its full incorporation of Aristotle's philosophy of natural desire.

a. Amor in S.Th 1a 2ae 26.

Aquinas begins by remarking that all amor is a form of appetitus (1. resp.), thus initially seeming to identify amor with its active manifestation. Yet the first designation of appetitus naturalis seems to reverse that. Moving through stages (appetitus naturalis, appetitus sensitivius, appetitus rationalis sive intellectivus) he remarks that the latter two forms of appetite are governed by the kind of knowledge that the subject has (consequens apprehensionem ipsius appetentis), whereas appetitus naturalis is governed by the way in which an entity has itself originally been known (per apprehensionem instituentis naturam, ibid.). This strange-sounding formula leads into Aquinas' theology of creation, where through the knowledge and will of God entities come to be out of nothingness; appetitus naturalis thus derives from the impressed mind of God, as the tendency of an entity to fill its appropriate place in the cosmic order: through creation entities bear the mark of the divine idea whereby they are of a certain form and occupy a certain ontological

formation, and it is this mark that constitutes their appetitus naturalis [30].

We can clarify this by noting how Aquinas specifies three requirements whereby an entity is teleologically ordered towards a specific end (finis, which is also bonum) - these are a nature proportionate to that end (natura proportionata ad finem illum); an inclination to that end, which is a natural desire for that end (inclinatio ad finem illum, quae est naturalis appetitus finis); and a movement towards that end (motus in finem). In illustration he considers the element earth. Earth has a certain nature which qualifies it for being in the centre (in terra est natura quaedam, per quam sibi competit esse in medio); in consequence of this there is a tendency according to which it naturally moves towards this place (hanc naturam sequitur inclinatio in locum medium, secundum quam appetit naturaliter talem locum); thus, with nothing in the way, earth is always moved downwards (nullo prohibente, semper deorsum movetur), (De Ver. 27.2).

[It should be noted here that appetitus naturalis is not just predicated of what is insensate and non-rational, but can also specify a range of functions and responses in sensate and rational creatures. Newton's law of gravity, for instance, would represent a universal instance of an appetitus naturalis, designating the tendency in all material beings to move earthwards. At this level of his discourse, and together with the Aristotelian resource,

Aquinas incorporates in his own manner the earliest Greek cosmological reflection on eros as the moving power of attraction within all things. At the same time he excludes any vision of a cosmos divided betweeing competing principles of eros and eris (strife). Even though his is a fallen cosmos - and the idea of the fall structures what he can say about appetitus in man - it is at the same time a redeemed cosmos, within which any force of conflict is controlled and secondary. The order of being is thus for Aquinas one of maximum harmony: it is the nature of all things to move towards their divinely implanted end in ordination to the bonum commune, and in moving to this end they are neither led nor forced (cf De Ver. 22.1; S.Th. I, 103 1 ad 3). As we remarked in contrasting the situation with Zhu Xi, being is an intellectual order ordained towards an intellectual goal].

What Aquinas says on appetitus naturalis, as a characteristic of all entities, opens for us here the second aspect of passivity in amor: instead of that passivity now being the term, the quies and transformatio of amor, passivity is the origin, the informed aptness of an entity to enjoy a certain kind of movement. For all forms of appetitus, Aquinas notes that amor is the principle of movement (amor dicitur illud quod est principium motus tendentis in finem amatum S.Th. 1a 2ae 26 1. resp), and this principium is referred to as connaturalitas (for appetitus naturalis) and coaptatio and complacentia boni (for appetitus sensitivus and

intellectivus). In terms of human agency this entails that the will is already originally marked by the complacentia boni and in this sense is one with its goal before any active process of willing is engaged. Before desire, complacentia thus marks a radical acceptance of the good, a moment of concord and harmony with all things, and thus a quality which profoundly mutes the tone of active desire. It is an ontological characterisation which is caught in the famous words of Julian of Norwich, that "All is well, and all is well, and all manner of thing shall be well", and which, independent of any theology of grace, makes a certain gratitude and acceptance the source of any willing. At this point there is a marked convergence between amor as complacentia boni for Aquinas, and ren as an aspect of ontological order for Zhu Xi: insofar as ren is part of human nature and of the natural order, it marks the given state of being-as-goodness prior to any active structure of desire, the tranquillity of li within the movement of qi, just as the complacentia boni marks the harmony of the intellectual creature with being before any active movement of will or desire.

b. Amor, dilectio and amicitia.

From what we have considered, we can thus see that Aquinas notes two passive movements in amor, the term whereby amans is transformed into amatum, and also the origin whereby amor is connaturalitas, coaptatio, complacentia boni, at which point amans is in some way

already conformed to amatum. And while we have noted that he predicates amor of God as an active power linked with voluntas, he also allows that amor marks the moment of receptiveness within the life of the Trinity. Aquinas understands the trinitarian processions as a circularity of movement and rest within divine esse. The order of created being is also marked by a circular movement, from origin to goal. And within creation any particular operations of love in turn take on a circular form.

Thus, in specifying that amor est passio Aquinas draws on Aristotle to show that the movement of love is circular: (appetitivus motus circulo agitur, ut dicitur in de Anima). First, he notes that what is desired moves the appetite (appetibile enim movet appetitum) establishing itself in some way within the intentio of appetite (faciens se quodammodo in ejus intentione) - at this point appetitus is passive, and prior to any movement towards the object of desire it is already in a sense identified with it: the appetibile is the active principle which changes the appetitus, and appetitus is in passive, receptive identity with it before movement. After the effect of the appetibile, appetitus then moves towards it, and the term of its movement (goal) is thus the same as the principle of its movement (origin) (ut sit ibi finis motus, ubi fuit principium (S.Th. 1a 2ae 26 2 resp). The sequence is described thus:

> Prima ergo immutatio appetitus ab appetibili vocatur amor, qui nihil est aliud quam complacentia appetibilis; et ex hac complacentia sequitur motus in

> appetibile, qui est desiderium; et ultimo quies, quae est gaudium. Ibid.

And in conclusion he remarks specifically that amor does not designate the movement of an appetite towards its object (non nominet motum appetitus tendentum in appetibile) but designates rather that prior change in an appetite whereby an object is known to be attractive (ei appetibile complaceat, ad 3).

We have already encountered various ways of linking terms such as amor, caritas, and amicitia. Cicero, for instance, spoke of caritas so as to make it a more complete or perfected form of amor. Aquinas discusses differences by remarking that amor, dilectio, caritas and amicitia are four similar, but not interchangeable, terms (S.Th. 1a2ae 2b. 3 resp). Amor is the most extensive term, so that any moment of dilectio or caritas is a moment of amor, but not vice versa (omnis enim dilectio vel caritas est amor, sed non e converso). Dilectio carries the connotation of choice; it is thus rooted in the will and is solely a property of rational creatures. Caritas is a perfection of amor, and indicates that the object of amor is held in high esteem (id quod amatur magni pretii aestimatur).

In speaking of amor and dilectio Aquinas notes that, insofar as they are located in the intellect, they are the same (in parte tamen intellectiva idem est amor et dilectio, ad 3) - this is in accord with what has already been established regarding amor intellectivus as a complacentia boni. But he adds that, when speaking of amor

and dilectio as aspects of will, amor specifies a more divine quality (nomen amoris esse divinus nomine dilectionis, ad 4); what is superior in amor is its passive aspect, in contrast with the active process of rational reflection implicit in dilectio - the passivity of amor marks a more direct attraction to God:

> Magis autem homo in Deum tendere potest per amorem passive quodammodo ab ipso Deo attractus, quam ad hoc eum ratio propria ducere possit, quod pertinet ad rationem dilectionis. ad 4

In this it is the passive moment in will, will as reception and acquiescence rather than active choice, that is primary. Here, despite the full assimilation of Aristotle on desire. and despite the privilege granted to human rationality and free will, it is the ontological moment of amor as reception of being, secundum modum recipientis, that is selected above any other. It is at this point also that contact could be made with Zhuangzi and Huineng, in the moment of spontaneous natural response to the order of being, in a passive acceptance of one's place within it - though for Aquinas the original goodness of being (ens et unum convertuntur) would be carried to a specific ontological foundation, and a theological ground, that differs from the emptiness of Daoism and Chan. Within the priority of amor over dilectio the process of willing becomes more a process of non-willing (wu-wei), of reducing the process of rational deliberation so as to open the space of contemplative acceptance - thus the Christian way first as a via receptionis, though the whole style of

thinking about being here could readily be shifted into a post-Christian, Heideggerian key.

We might finally note that Aquinas speaks of amicitia at this point by situating it within amor, in such a way as to distinguish two fundamentally different kinds of amor, amor concupiscentiae, love-of-desire, and amor amicitae, love-of-friendship. [Given that the word "concupiscence" has now in English - or did have, when it was more commonly used - pejorative overtones, it is important to remark that for Aquinas "concupiscentia" is a much more neutral term]. His distinction between these two kinds of amor allows Aquinas to make more precise a distinction which we found not to be fully worked out in Aristotle's account of friendship; it concerns the process of "wishing good for someone." Aquinas notes that two aspects are involved: amor concupiscentiae relates to the object desired, whether that object is desired for oneself or for another; amor amicitiae relates to the person for whom the object is desired. [He does not make it clear at this point, but his exposition allows that amor amicitiae could be towards self, as the one for whom a bonum is desired]. Not all friendship is amor amicitiae: insofar as a person is loved for what we desire from them by way of use or pleasure, then that person becomes a bonum desired through amor concupiscentiae [S.Th 1a2ae 26 4 ad3]. Amor amicitiae, by implication, is desire for the well-being of a person - whether self or other - insofar as that well-being is considered in relation to the bonum commune.

5. Aspects of Caritas

(i) Caritas and amor, grace and nature

We have seen that Aquinas considers caritas to be a perfection of amor; that brief reference might seem to let us situate caritas within an entirely naturalistic frame: amor is the general tendency to perfection, caritas is the quality marking chosen and valued affective relationships - we would here be very close to what Cicero has to say. The relationship between amor and caritas should, however, open for us a different issue, that concerning relations between the order of nature and the order of grace: here we would situate amor within the area of the general movement of all entities towards God, and caritas within the area of that human responsiveness to God and to persons which is only reckoned possible through the work of Christ's incarnation and redemption [31].

Here, as we deal with part of the contrast between nature and grace, it should be noted from the start that Aquinas' "nature" is already a fully theological conception: nature issues from God, bears the mark of divine creation, is oriented towards God and desires God as its natural perfection. The ultimate end towards which intellectual creatures are ordered is, for Aquinas, an intellectual end, a vision of the divine essence, and this is affirmed in a theology where God is known as Ens intellectuale:

> Visio...divinae substantiae est ultimus finis cujuslibet intellectualis substantiae 3C.G. 58 Item

Nonetheless, if that is the perfective end of any human life, and as such its natural end (omnis intellectus naturaliter desiderat divinae substantiae visionem 3CG 57 Item), it is reckoned an end not capable of realisation through the order of creation, but only through grace. The orientation towards this end is capable of partial realisation in this life, according to the exercise of reason alone - it is in this respect that Aquinas reckons philosophy already to constitute a participatio beatitudinis - but its final fulfilment is only set within the divine patria. In focussing this issue Aquinas speaks of two forms of felicitas, one achieved in via which is a knowing that does not attain to essences, the other achieved in patria which is a vision of essence through the lumen gloriae

> duplex est felicitas hominis. Una imperfecta quae est in via, de qua dicit Philosophus; et haec consistit in cognitione substantiarum separatarum per habitum sapientiae: imperfecta tamen, et talis qualis est in via possibilis, non ut sciatur ipsa quidditas. Alia est perfecta in patria, quae ipse Deus per essentian videbitur, et aliae substantiae separatae: et haec felicitas non erit per aliquem scientiam speculativam, sed per lumen gloriae. de Trin. 6.4.3.

Aquinas evinces a certain ambivalence over the capacity of persons naturally to desire a vision of the divine essence (part of his problem here was to determine what orientation to perfection was enjoyed by such "pagan" philosophers as Socrates and Aristotle who lived before Christ), and at times it appears that what is naturally desired is only a

limited perfection that might be possible and known without grace. Remarking that beatitude designates the ultimate perfection of a rational nature, a perfection naturally desired as such, he qualifies things by saying that a final perfection is twofold (Ultima autem perfectio rationalis seu intellectualis naturae est duplex, S.Th. 1a 62.1.c): there is a perfection that can be desired by nature, and such was desired by Aristotle; there is another perfection, the vision of the essence of God, which can only be desired through grace:

> videre Deum per essentian, in quo ultima beatitudo rationalis creaturae consistit, est supra naturam cujuslibet intellectus creati. Unde nulla creatura rationalis potest habere motum voluntatis ordinatum ad illam beatitudinem, nisi mota a super naturali agente. Et hoc dicimus auxilium gratiae. S.Th. la 62.2.c

And he goes on to remark that a turning towards the final beatitudo is rendered difficult and beyond nature (supra naturam) because of the corruption of the body and the effect of sin (ibid ad.2). [We might note that it is at this point, if not elsewhere, that the notion of matter as a certain resistance fo the divine - a question we raised earlier - might be located. In general Aquinas' concept of matter is of a pure passivity that is shaped by a structuring form - in the human sphere the soul is the form of the body, instead of something contained in the body as it was for Augustine. Yet the body here does set a limit, not through the effect of sin alone but as a result of its materiality, to that vision of the divine essence which is a purely intellectual affair].

Insofar as a failure or limitation of natural desire results from the sin with which, for Aquinas, all men are marked through the fall of Adam, then the lifting, perfection and transformation of natural desire is only achieved through the life and death of Christ, which constitutes the prime locus of caritas. The death of Christ takes away a barrier erected by man between man and God. God's love is constant (Aquinas quotes Jeremiah 33: In caritate perpetua dilexi te, S.Th IIIa 49.4 ad2), and Christ's work, a cleansing and a recompense for wrongdoing (ibid.), restores, or creates a new, human openness to God.

(ii) Caritas and virtue

Within a theology of the virtues - and it is this framework which allows the only possible final articulation of virtue and its tendency that Aquinas can acknowledge - caritas plays a foundational role: it is the form, the end, the mother, the motor, the root of all virtue. It is caritas for instance that directs all virtues towards their ultimate end

> (per caritatem ordinatur actus omnium aliarum virtutum ad ultimum finem, S.Th. 2a 2ae 23.8. resp)

constituting thus the form of the virtues and their efficient cause:

> caritas dicitur esse forma aliarum virtutem, non quidem exemplariter aut essentialiter, sed magis effective inquantum scilicet omnibus formam imponit secundum modum praedictum. ad 1

[What is covered in the secundum modum praedictum is the

position established in the responsio: all virtues are directed towards an end, which is identified as principale bonum hominis (cf 23.7 resp); ends are however identified in a twofold way, as we have already seen; and it is caritas that directs any particular virtue from a proximate end towards a final end (ultimus finis) (cf 23.7. resp)].

Aquinas links caritas with the direct activity of God in the life of an individual, though specifying this in such a way as to attempt to preserve individual freedom. Within an individual's life acknowledgement is made that perfection in caritas is a cumulative process, passing through discrete stages (an analogy is offered with the natural stages in life through which an individual grows, S.Th. 2a 2ae 24.9 resp).

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

> "How big the world is. They keep telling us it's getting smaller all the time. But it's not, is it? Whatever we learn about it makes it bigger. Whatever we learn about it makes it bigger. Whatever we do to complicate things makes it bigger. It's all a complication. It's one big tangled thing." She began to laugh. "Modern communications don't shrink the world, they make it bigger. Faster planes make it bigger. They give us more, they connect more things. The world isn't shrinking at all. People who say it's shrinking have never flown Air Zaire in a tropical storm." I don't know what whe meant by this but it sounded funny. It sounded funny to her too. She had to talk through her laughter. "No wonder people go to school to learn stretching and bending. The world is so big and complicated we don't trust ourselves to figure out anything on our own. No wonder people read books that tell them how to run, walk and sit. We're trying to keep up with the world, the size of it, the complications.
> Don DeLillo, The Names

We might begin with a criticism of a certain reading of Plato:

> As for the properly philosophical configuration of Platonic thought, it is but an anachronistic project. So many anachronistic categories and architectonic violations imposed, under the pretext of fidelity, upon the thought of the philosopher who recommended respect for the articularities of the living organism, and thus for those of discourse.
> Derrida, 1982:221, 223.

The criticism returns us in an obvious way to the points outlined in chapter one: the difficulty of reading, the problem of interpretation, the recognition of the other as other. Here Derrida suggests that the discovery of a system in Plato is an importation: system is more a function of the metaphysical tradition developing from

Plato than an aspect of his own free and supple thinking. Yet Derrida's reading itself apparently sits here in the shadow of metaphysics, bear the metaphysical concern with truth that has since been imported into hermeneutics, the belief that a text might finally yield one true interpretation, that once the encrusted layers of systematic philosophy are removed the true impulse and tendency of Plato's philosophy might be seen. A different approach is perhaps indicated by Dewey:

> Plato's generation would, I think, have found it difficult to class Plato. Was he an inept visionary or a subtle dialectician? A political reformer or a founder of a new type of literature? Was he a moral exhorter or an instructor in an Academy? Was he a theorist upon education, or the inventor of a method of knowledge? We, looking at Plato through the centuries of exposition and interpretation, find no difficulty in placing Plato as a philosopher and in attributing to him a system of thought. We dispute about the nature and content of this system, but we do not doubt it is there. It is the intervening centuries which have furnished Plato with his technique and which have developed and wrought Plato to a system.[1]

Here Dewey and Derrida agree on the consolidation of a certain Western reading of Plato but disagree on how to approach the Platonic text. Dewey finds many Platos disseminated throughout a series of writings, and sits comfortably with the idea that these differences are simply that: to be a philosopher is no greater than to be a rhetor, to be a visionary no worse than to be a teacher: the functions of each are different, each contributing in its own way to a larger enterprise. Derrida in part seems at first to want to reduce differences to a set of structuralist laws governing the formation of texts,

inverting the Forms so that instead of giving us a metaphysical otherworld he provides a structuralist underworld, abandoning Plato the systematiser in favour of Plato the maker of interiority from the myth of writing. He offers a more subtle reading elsewhere, however, and at those points there is greater convergence between his sense of textual indeterminacy and Dewey's sense of textual differences; it is on that shared idea of the text as a manifold, a plurality not a unity - precisely thus a text, and not a book - that I wish now to draw within a partial commentary on the readings I have offered in the previous chapters [2].

1. Reading Traditions.

Do we sit necessarily in the shadow of the past, listening still to the ghostly voices of our ancestors breaking through the fixed solidity of any present writing? Does this otherworld, the beyond of our traditions from whose constraints the enlightenment of reason has worked to set us free, still claim our allegiance, and if so for what reasons and to what ends? Is our task as readers one of filial piety, gathering the fractured logoi spermatikoi of forgotten voices and drawing them into a whole of meaning and value, erecting thus a monument that might observe and govern our lives today? Or do we simply walk down other paths, consign the past to an appropriate oblivion whilst gathering from it anything reckoned useful for us now, constructing en route those rituals of parricide that might

free the heart from its dark entwinement with its oppressor? How much of this has been done already?[3]

(i) Different Pasts, Different Presents.

It has been one hallmark of the modern era to proclaim itself as new, to separate itself from the old order and to find in its own fresh-minted practices something marked by difference. Virginia Woolf's observation that, on a certain day in 1914, human nature changed, serves as a crystallisation of a sense of newness that has survived the chaos of subsequent decades, even if what is reckoned new is now thought more problematic than when it was first announced. Marx and Darwin, Freud and Nietzsche stand more solidly over this century's course than almost any other figures, and each bears a sign of no return: no return to innocence, to simplicity, to transcendence, to providence, to a theological order within which the human figures as a summit of protection. As we saw earlier with Serres, the mark of the human is the mark of the parasite, as it is for any other organism. The rethinking of human nature and its prospects within this framework has to be complete, and seemingly from other foundations than those established in previous ages [4].

Within this framework, accepted, perceived and rejected in a variety of ways, the question of the status of the past has been variously answered, scarcely once without inherent anbiguities. In analytical philosophy, for instance, the function of philosophy has come to be seen in terms of problem solving, and of clarification of the

language within which philosophical (and other) problems are put. Here Plato and Aristotle might be preserved within a philosophical paideia, though somewhat unsteadily if all the problems they raised have all either been settled by later philosophers or abandoned as pseudo-problems (in which case, why begin the paideia two and a half thousand years ago, rather than with Quine?) And since some analytical philosophers do read historical texts for the problems they contain, there emerges a question of circularity concerning the process whereby one comes to know which texts still carry interesting and unresolved issues. The editorial policy in the recent Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy is one which chooses for consideration only those philosophers, and those aspects of their work, which remain philosophically germane - but the very process of achieving that policy entails a prior substantial act of faith in the extensive reading of historical philosophical texts, in order to distinguish the still 'living' works and issues [5] . The analytical philosopher is himself here parasitic on the work of historical inquiry, whilst at the same time abandoning history in favour of perennial philosophical truths or issues, leaving unresolved the question why one should want to turn to the medievals at all.

The historical naivete of analytical philosophy is matched by an opposite tendency amongst hermeneutic philosophers such as Heidegger and, to an extent, Derrida,

where the continuing significance of the work of reading traditions is simply taken for granted. If the hermeneutic enterprise - as evidenced in Herder, Dilthey and Scheiermacher - is centred on the retrieval of metaphysical and spiritual truth from the particular historical forms of its manifestation (and is marked by the organisation of curricula around literary, philosophical and theological "classics", which are judged still to be able to speak, still to be relevant), then the deconstructive turn perhaps constitutes, within that enterprise, a wandering in philosophical graveyards, with an invocation to the dead to speak again but differently. This desire to preserve the voice of death within the forms of a living culture can perhaps itself be read as an anachronism, and as an idealism which lifts the text above the material and social conditions of its production and operation [6].

Relations of past to present can be as manifoldly varied as the forms of our contemporary culture, so our question why read the past can become differentiated into the indefinite series, why read the past from this perspective? Here the question of the value ascribed to the perspective becomes an issue. One reading of postmodernism is that it marks an uninhibited and eclectic pluralism: if "Anything goes" becomes with Feyerabend the hallmark of free scientific enquiry, beyond the constraints of an orthodoxy of methods, then it becomes also the hallmark of a postmodern culture which wishes to define itself in terms of play and creativity rather than as submission to

orthodoxy or respect for tradition. Yet while pluralism works for those able and willing to join the pluralist's game, it remains an undermining option for those positions which claim some access to the Truth (whether scientific, metaphysical, political, psychoanalytic or religious). Hre pluralism puts in question the foundations of truth, but its own non-founded discourse is itself challenged at those points where play meets the fixed contours of authority. [And how far are those contours required for play itself? Borges remarked that it is only under the force of a totalitarian regime that the full self-enclosing, allegoric and seductive play of literature could come into its own. Steiner, too, sees in the willed concealment of art its deepest intensity, premissing this on the notion that th wellsprings of language lie in privacy, not in the open forum of public discourse [7]. Even if one takes this stance as characteristic of a certain style of literary art, the generalised openness of a postmodern stance is here questioned].

If a new pluralism sees itself as the cutting edge of the modern - thus implicitly retaining the modernist theme of an avant-garde, and retaining some of the ideology it more generally discredits, whilst seeing its own playful stance as the aufhebung of these postures (to be post modern is better than to be modern, to be pluralist more civilised and democratic than to favour the elitism of a single orthodoxy) - then its attitude towards less

enlightened positions is rightly one either of critique or dismissal, which thus, from within the advocacy of pluralism, sets a series of defining parameters to the very idea of a pluralist culture. Rorty, although not at this point specifically addressing a postmodern agenda, thus argues that the different problematics of both analytical and hermeneutic philosophy have now been superceded, that a paradigm-shift has occurred in philosophy, making any concern with metaphysical or representational truth, and with foundational positions, a now obsolete issue (which does not mean that certain philosophers will no longer deal with such an issue, only that in so doing they will represent an increasingly irrelevant species: worthwhile philosophical inquiry will simply be located elsewhere [8]). In this framework the concern with pluralism can involve an enlightened tolerance of unenlightened positions, but more critically it seeks the elimination of obsolete issues for the cultural agenda.

Insofar as this approach shows a readiness to let unproductive options die away, then a perspective within it from which to read the past might be as follows: that one starts with an aspect of contemporary culture judged to be important, and incorporates as much of any history as seems of value to illuminate, further or resolve it. Here, rather than assuming with the keepers of tradition that we must read the "classics" first in order to become competent philosophers and thinkiners, engagement might start from an issue such as the Holocaust, or some problems of

translation between English and Chinese, and, in the development of a philosophy of culture or a philosophy of language, incorporate as much of a history of philosophy, culture and etymology as seems required by the topic. Shifting thus from the forms of what Alice Miller calls ". oisonous pedagogy" - the use of learning as an induction to conformity - we would engage in learning as in a play of creativity geared towards the enhancement of creativity in others [9].

That much said, it remains that a postmodern stance is one option in the contemporary world, and that other options would negate the projects it might favour. It is easy enough to read twentieth century Thomism as a reactionary flight from the complexities of present life and discourse, but the transcendentalism of which it has been a guardian remains disseminated, beyond the boundaries of one specific school. Thus even though Mackie concludes that theism can no longer constitute a philosophically coherent option [10], for the philosophy of culture the fixing of the rhetoric of transcendence within a contemporary discourse, the reckoning of its force and provenance, remains a vital issue.

(ii) Aesthetics and Transcendence: the Imagining of History.

Wallace Stevens is perhaps the clearest proponent of that vision of the imagination which held strong sway within modernism: rather than speaking of it as a capacity to apprehend and form transcendent truth (as it was for

Coleridge, but could no longer be after Nietzsche), he sees it as a fictive power, a power to invent worlds, a human power that is necessary but fragile, a power that is today increasingly unsure of its bearings. This freeing of imagination from truth, this option for aesthetic enhancement over truthful discourse, marks one contemporary way of handling the resources of the past. When Peter Brook directs the Mahabharata he does not require of us an absolute belief in the intricacies of Hindu theism; his narrative deconstructs itself as it proceeds, the storyteller intervenes to remind us that the form of our engagement is, precisely, a story, the spell of mystery and transcendence is given its play, dis-spelled, conjured up once more, in recognition that the gods have always been ciphers of human power, fertile when perceived thus, dangerous when reckoned as signs of the Other [11]. So also Wim Wenders, in Wings of Desire, takes Rilke's Angel, a late marker of Romanticism, and gives it human form in contemporary Berlin: through the eyes of the angel it is the human drama which appears as eminently attractive, in its joy and pain, longing and pathos - it is here that the angel comes to rest, not to inspire and redeem, but to live.

These two examples, expressions of the power of the human and acts of faith in it represent transition beyond the structuralist death of humanism remarked in Foucault's elegy:

> One thing in any case is certain: man is neither the

> oldest nor the most constant problem that has been posed for human knowledge. Taking a relatively short chronological sample within a restricted geographical area - European culture since the sixteenth century - one can be certain that man is a recent invention within it. It is not around him and his secrets that knowledge prowled for so long in the darkness. In fact, among all the mutations that have affected the knowledge of things and their order, the knowledge of identities, differences, characters, equivalences, words - in short, in the midst of all the episodes of that profound history of the Same - only one, that which began a century and a half ago and is now perhaps drawing to a close, has made it possible for the figure of man to appear. And that appearance was not the liberation of an old anxiety, the transition into luminous consciousness of an age-old concern, the entry into objectivity of something that had long remained trapped within beliefs and philosophies: it was the effect of a change in the fundamental arrangements of knowledge. As the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of a recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end.
> If those arrangements were to disappear as they appeared, if some event of which we can at the moment do no more than sense the possibility - without knowing either what its form will be or what it promises - were to cause them to crumble, as the ground of Classical thought did, at the end of the eighteenth century, then one can certainly wager that man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea. Foucault, 1970: 386-87.

Foucault begins The Order of Things with a problem of taxonomy, the ordered relationship of entities within discourses, the construction of a site of meaning within which similarities and differences might be identified, placed and known. In his archaeology of modernism, the groundwork for Rorty's philosophical paradigm shift (for the French it is a Bachelardian epistemological break) is already underway, and within this clearing a new play of meaning which ruptures the boundaries of disciplinary orthodoxy is set in motion. As part of this play - and we are still moving here towards a reckoning with tradition - a new question of "man" is at stake.

Confucianism - in its origins, through its formulation by Zhu Xi, and beyond - has always placed "man" at the centre of its discourse; not a "scientific" discourse, not a discourse that wants to make "man" and "his" achievements (of language, political forms, religious structures) the object of an increasingly differentiated network of categorisation, but one which has instead sought to place knowledge of self-perfective practices at the heart of its various agendas. Yet the contemporary reading of this tradition is problematic, as we suggested in chapter one. Joseph Needham's retrieval of the practice and theorisation of the forms of scientific inquiry in China is a work of modernist scholarship, involving commitment to the idea of a single line of progress in scientific development and presenting itself as a chapter in world humanism [12] . As such, and in various of its aspects it has released a hitherto obscured set of transformative practices so that they are now open for pragmatic and aesthetic, consideration; acupuncture and other aspects of Chinese medicine may for instance now become prized features of a broader medical culture. But what value, what cultural location, can be posited for the retrieval of Confucian and neo-Confucian humanism? Can its vision of human perfection,its strategies, its metaphysics of man and nature, be incorporated into a contemporary philosophy of culture? To vary what we said earlier: if Whitehead gives us an organic world view, if a new phase of science is

beginning to develop within a properly ecological framework, then do we need an intensive reading of Zhu Xi in order to deepen our own responsive humanism, or is it not better - not simply in a time of urgency, but from mature recognition that the past is past - to acknowledge that the time of Confucianism is gone, and that appropriate to our world now is the invention of new forms of humanism - new ways of viewing "the human", and new networks of social relationships - rather than any retrieval of what has been surpassed? Similarly, even though Aquinas offers a holistic Christian Aristotelianism, is it not better to acknowledge the intellectual and cultural shifts that displace his world from ours, to acknowledge thus the historical specificity and determinateness of his style of thinking and his world vision, and so to proceed instead to develop a different holism of man and nature that is founded on new resources?

To ask these questions is not to suggest that a single programme can be established for relating to traditional world views. And while I would be sceptical of the possibilities here, there is a strongly argued position that the retrieval of neo-Confucianism as liberal humanism might constitute a moment in the remaking of post-revolutionary Chinese humanism, just as it might also constitute a humanising of capitalist culture within South-East Asia; if so, and independent of any reasons that might validate its re-appropriation in an East Asian context, there would be an argument for its place in

Western cultural agendas as an aspect of our continuing and extended awareness of others.

Simply to be aware of differences that exist is thus an important feature of a pluralist world view. To acknowledge that there are forms of cultural dynamics other than that named "postmodernism" in the West is also to acknowledge that different sets of reasons can be given for reappropriating rather than abandoning traditions, that different transcendent economies can also be argued for as valuable fictive spaces set beyond the imagination of materialism. It can also be claimed that the remaking of humanism will incorporate strong elements of physical and psychological awareness which has been achieved and articulated in a series of non-Western meditational and religious disciplines. And even when we accept that the worldview of Aquinas, as of any Christian theology, is now superceded, we can perhaps still for a time engage in a process of re-reading the past by way of a Wittgensteinian passage of liberation, a distancing from that which still casts its shadows on our thinking:

> after all, this was the proper task of a history of thought, as against a history of behaviours, or representations: to define the conditions in which human beings "problematize" what they are, what they do, and the world in which they live. Foucault 1986:10.

APPENDIX ONE

NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS

BHT	Bohutong
BJR	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library
BMFEA	Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
BSYS	Bulletin of Sung-Yuan Studies
Cah Civ Med	Cahiers de Civilisation Medievale
CHL	Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum
CSP	Chinese Studies in Philosophy
HJAS	Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies
HR	History of Religions
IPQ	International Philosophical Quarterly
JAS	Journal of Asian Studies
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JCP	Journal of Chinese Philosophy
JESHO	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
JHI	Journal of the History of Ideas
JOS	Journal of Oriental Studies
LH	Lun Heng (Tr. by A. Forke)
MS	Monumenta Serica
Mes St	Medieval Studies
MTB	Memoirs of the Toyo Bunko
PEW	Philosophy East and West
R Sc R	Revue de Sciences Religieuses
SB	Sung Biographies (ed. Franke)
SBl	Sung Bibliography (ed. Balazs-Hervouet)
TP	T'oung Pao

Notes to Chapter 1.

1. Cf for instance the presentation of Confucian thinking as enlightened deism and rational tolerance put forward in the Chinese Catechism, Voltaire, Philosophical Dictionary, pp 78-95; cf also the (not unqualified) presentation of elite Chinese virtue in the section On China:

> the religion of the scholars is admirable. No superstition, no absurd legends, none of those dogmas that insult reason and nature...For more than forty centuries the simplest worship has appeared to them the best...They are content to worship a god with all the wise men of the world. Ibid p.115.

The continuing hold on European thought of the rational model of China can be seen for instance, in Weber's study of Chinese religion, where the Confucian option is presented as significantly lacking a mythic dimension:

> The prestige of the literati has not consisted in a charisma of magical powers of sorcery, but rather in a knowledge of writing and of literature as such...the Chinese literati-politicians...were primarily oriented towards problems of internal administration...This constant orientation toward problems of the "correct" administration of the state determined a far-reaching, practical and political rationalism among the intellectual strata of the feudal period. Weber, 1964:109-10.

Weber sees Confucius as providing a "pragmatic transformation of the ancient tradition (of charismatic warrior kings)" ibid. p.113.

2. Cf for instance the movement of inquiry that occurs in "A Dialogue on Language", (Heidegger 1971b), where the shift towards a radical encounter between Eastasian and European worlds occurs in 3 stages:

- an affirmation of difference -

> Some time ago I called language...the house of Being. If man by virtue of his language dwells within the claim and call of Being, then we Europeans probably dwell in an entirely different home to Eastasian man. (p5)

-a hesitation that indicates a direction -

> I do not yet see whether what I am trying to think of as the nature of language is also adequate for the nature of the Eastasian language; whether in the end - which would also be the beginning - a nature of language can reach the thinking experience, a nature which would offer the assurance that European-Western saying and Eastasian saying will enter into a dialogue such that in it there sings something that wells up from a single source. (p8)

-a tentative affirmation that there may be a common way of saying that undercuts the dualities of metaphysical and conceptual discourse

> It seems to me as though even we, now, instead of

> speaking about language, had tried to take some steps along a course which entrusts itself to the nature of Saying. (p.54)

Some of the issues at stake here will come up for us later in our elucidation of Daoist and Chan/Zen thinking. For further reference, of the other essays in Heidegger 1971b; the essay "The Origin of the Work of Art," Heidegger 1971a:17-87; Heidegger 1966 and 1968; and in commentary Wood 1981, and Halliburton 1981.

3. On Rodin cf for instance Judrin et Laurent, 1979. Achille Delaroche provides an assessment of Gauguin to which the latter himself was sympathetic:

> "Gauguin is the painter of primitive natures; he loves them and possesses their simplicity, their suggestion of the hieratic, their somewhat awkward and angular naivety. His personages share the unstudied spontaneity of the virgin flora. It was only logical, therefore, that he should have exalted for our visual delight the riches of this tropical vegetation where a free life of Eden luxuriates under the happy stars ... a local habitation ... unpolluted as it still is by the lies of our civilisation." Gauguin 1985a:21.

And cf Gauguin's own fantasising of his visionary quest in Noa Noa, with his contrast between the deceitful burden of Western civilisation and the innocence of a young Tahitian male:

> "I alone carried the burden of an evil thought, a whole civilisation had been before me in evil and had educated me." Gauguin 1985b:28.

Bataille develops a potent reading of the power of art at Lascaux, seeing in it the emergence of a new humanity, possessed of the force of transgression:

> "At Lascaux, more troubling even than the deep descent into the earth, what preys upon and transfixes us is the vision, present before our very eyes, of all that is most remote. This message, moreover, is intensified by an inhuman strangeness. Following along the rock walls, we see a kind of cavalcade of animals ... But this animality is nonetheless for us the first sign, the blind unthinking sign and yet the living intimate sign, of our presence in the real world." Bataille 1980:11.

4. Cf O'Flaherty 1976 for a statement on her deployment of different tools in exploring the layers of Hindy mythology.

5. From "Violence and Metaphysics", Derrida, 1978:81. Derrida incorporates a footnote in the text as marked* which reads:

> That is, to relativism: the truth of philosophy does not depend upon its relation to the actuality of the

Greek or the European event. p.311

Following Husserl and Heidegger he identifies philosophy as an event or irruption that lays claim to and gives form to Greece and Europe; and he quotes Heidegger in elucidation:

> (the) word philosophia tells us that philosophy is something which, first of all, determines the existence of the Greek world. Not only that - philosophia also determines the innermost basic feature of our Western-European history, the often heard expression "Western-European philosophy" is, in truth, a tautology. Why? Because philosophy is Greek in its nature; Greek, in this instance, means that in origin the nature of philosophy is of such a kind that it first appropriated the Greek word, and only it, in order to unfold." Heidegger, 1958:29-31; Derrida, 1978:312.

Derrida's complicity in the Western tradition at this point, and his failure to distance himself from Heidegger, excludes a broader consideration of those other philosophies which are not given over to the Greeks.

6. Nonetheless it should be noted that, partly in the wake of Derrida's work, a reappraisal of Sophistic thinking is underway. For scholarly and philosophical examinations of the issues for instance, cf Kerferd 1981a and 1981b, and Cassin 1986a and 1986b; and for a Sophistic re-presentation within a contemporary philosophical position cf Lyotard and Thebaud 1981.

7. It could of course be argued that it is precisely the limit texts in twentieth century writing - with their moments of reversal, impossibility, contradiction and deconstruction, the "limits of sense" Llewelyn, 1987, in figures as varied as Bataille, Artaud, Ponge, Levinas and Husserl - that Derrida concentrates on, thereby loosening the solid structure of tradition in a reading that shows the irruptive other. And Derrida himself acknowledges that this particular movement of loosening and deconstruction, already underway, is what he draws upon and expands. However the location of disruption primarily at this cultural point, and the acknowledgement - differently worked from Heidegger's - of a certain veiling process in the texts of Plato, whence philosophy became dominated by a metaphysics of speech, presence, self-presence, and the proper, constitutes a reading that does not focus strongly on moments of irruptive power elsewhere, whether in the medieval or Renaissance/Reformation worlds. There is a sense in which, in his early writings, Derrida over-creates the solidity of tradition as a kind of terror (perhaps leaning on Foucault and Althusser), in order to grant a special favour to certain contemporary readings that might liberate us from it. That much said, the new intellectual formation that emphasises writing is prcisely <u>new</u>, and transformative:

> Now, one can follow the treatment accorded to writing as a particularly revelatory symptom, from Plato to Rousseau, Saussure, Husserl, occasionally Heidegger himself, and a fortiori in all the modern discourses - sometimes the most faithful ones - that remain within Husserl's and Heidegger's questions. Such a symptom is necessarily, and structurally, dissimulated, for reasons and along pathways that I attempt to analyze. And if this symptom is revealed today, it is not at all due to some more or less ingenious discovery initiated by someone here or there. It is due rather to a certain total transformation (that can no longer even be called 'historical' or 'worldwide,' because the transformation infringes upon the security of such significations) that also can be ascertained in other determined gields (mathematical and logical formalization, linguistics, ethnology, psychoanalysis, political economy, biology, the technology of information, programming,etc.)." Derrida 1981b:7

8. I consider the idea of a perennial philosophy further below. For Thomists the notion that Aquinas provides the perennial philosophy is a basic datum - cf for instance the remarks of Copleston:

> "how could one find in St. Thomas an answer to some of Nietzsche's deepest yearnings and struggles - and yet, if Thomism is the perennial philosophy, there must be such an answer to be found." Copleston 1944:2

9. Early comparisons linked Zhu Xi with Spinoza, taking his philosophy as a form of ethical monism similar to Spinoza's (cf for instance Graf, 1949), or with Leibniz. The first comparisons of ideas, some of them made by Leibniz himself (though in quite general terms) date from the introduction of Chinese philosophy to Europe by the early Jesuit missionaries in China (who themselves engaged in much comparative work). A valuable survey of Western receptions of Zhu Xi can be found in Chan, 1976. On comparison between Zhu Xi and Leibniz cf for instance Bernard-Maitre 1937, Needham 1956, passim, the introductory remarks to Rosemont and Cook 1977, and Mungello 1978. (For further on Jesuit comparative work cf below on Figurism.) An abridged translation of Zhu Xi's Zizhi tongjian gangmu (Outlines of the Comprehensive Mirror of Good Government) - itself a selective and abridged edition of Sima Guang's Zizhi tongjian (Comprehensive Mirror of Good Government) which was planned by Zhu Xi and executed by his followers - was made by the French Jesuit J.A. Marie de Moyriac de Mailla under the title Histoire Generale de la Chine, ou Annales de cet Empire (published in 13 volumes, 1777-80). Through the Histoire Zhu Xi's Confucian interpretation of

Chinese history did much to shape European perceptions of China.

When compared with the attention given to Leibniz or Spinoza, the significance of a comparison between Aquinas and Zhu Xi has emerged more slowly. Recent work has been done in the area, however. A brief outline comparison between them is presented in Callahan 1950, and fuller treatment is provided by Graf 1970:293-347 ("Der Neukonfuzianismus und die Weltanschauung der Hochscholastik.") A useful schematic comparison of the metaphysical systems of both can be found in Li Jianqiu 1978; and some of the broader thematic issues are touched indirectly by Ching 1977.

10. Rorty 1980 (cf particularly pp 357-372) suggests a basic contrast between systematic and edifying philosophies which, while of value, robs philosophy of its agony and desire: there is much more to Nietzsche, or Zhuangzi, than can be captured by the epithet "edifying", and I would speak of "disruptive" philosophies in order to catch an appropriate sense of conflict and energy rather than gentility.

11. That break is as crucial in Western as in Chinese contexts, though differently figured. If for China the question is whether a Confucian past can ever bear any future significance - being tied, perhaps ineluctably to a patriarchal and agricultural vision of society - for the West the question is one of the relations between modernism, post-modernism and tradition. Tradition-minded philosophers such as Heidegger and Derrida continue to work with resources that are perhaps profoundly inadequate as means of probing and articulating the dilemmas of a present culture, but in doing so they nonetheless focus the difficulties involved in speaking of the end/destruction, closure/deconstruction of Western metaphysics.

12. On this aspect of Habermas a useful set of essasys is Habermas 1979.

13. Foucault's dark vision of history, and of the possibilities of present emancipation, is very close to that evident in the late work of the frankfurt, particularly the writings of Adorno. For Foucault's reading of Nietzsche on genealogy cf his essay "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" in Foucault 1981 :76-100.

14. I am thus for instance in sympathy with the kind of reading provided in MacIntyre 1981, though not with his conclusions.

15. One complex, and poorly-defined space is that of comparative philosophy. Aspects of Western response to non-Western traditions can be found in Gay 1973 and Manuel 1959. Collections such as Moore 1968, Raju and Castell

1968, and Sharfstein 1978 show some formative and recent trends in comparative study. The comparative histories of philosophy by Plott 1977 and 1979, and Nakamura 1976 are significant new developments. Donald Lach's Asia in the Making of Europe and Joseph Needham's Science and Civilisation in China provide a background of broader cultural materials relevant to comparative philosophy.

16. Figurism - continuous with Renaissance Hermeticism and with the idea of a single perennial (neo-Platonist) philosophy put forward under the rubric of philosophia perennis or priscia theologia - was a hermeneutic strategy deployed by a number of Jesuits in China during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The basic move was to overcome the diversity of cultural origins by tracing a single line of development that led to Christianity: the otherness of China was thus accommodated on the assumption that the Old Testament figure Shem had gone to China and given the original law to Fu Xi, first of the mythic Chinese rulers; China was thus incorporated within a single original divine dispensation.
Schmitt, 1966, reckons the first datable reference to the term 'philosophia perennis' to occur in the work of Agostino Steuco of 1540, De perenni Philosophia. The idea of such a philosophy, however, antedates Steuco and is clearly located in the discourse of early Renaissance neo-Platonism, which in turn draws on Kabbalism, Hermeticism, Platonism, and early Christian theology. A central position, as found for instance in Marsilio Ficino, was that two streams of truth run through history, one philosophical, the other theological: true philosophy is Platonism, true theology Christianity, for the former the basis is Plato, for the latter Scripture. Here it was also held, however, that prior to Plato there existed an even earlier tradition of philosophical truth, referred to as the prisca theologia (or: prisca philosophia, philosophia priscorum), and Ficino gives one description of that tradition as follows:

> In those things which pertain to theology the six great theologians of former times concur. Of whom the first is said to have been Zoroaster, head of the magi; the second is Hermes Trismegistus, originator of the priests of Egypt. Orpheus succeeded Hermes. Aglaophemus was initiated to the sacred things of Orpheus. Pythagoras succeeded Aglaophemus in theology. To Pythagoras succeeded Plato, who in his writings encompassed these men's universal wisdom, added to it, and elucidated it." Schmitt 1966: 508.

This tradition is described in various ways by different writers, with various figures being considered central to it. For more detailed considerations cf Walker 1972.
It should be noted that not all the early Jesuits belonged to the Figurist group and that, notably, Ricci was not amongst them. The four chief members were Joseph Henri de Prémare, Joachim Bouvet, Jean-Alexis de Gollet, and Jean-Francois Foucquet. For further details cf Bernard

1935, Rowbotham 1956, Walker 1972: 194-230, and Mungello 1976. For further on Ricci cf the fascinating study by Spence, 1984, and also the recent work by Rule,1986.

17. If the Jesuits spoke of an original transmission of law, Hegel saw an original movement of Mind from East to West, fixing the historical record to deny the independence of diverse forms of historical order and assimilating all histories to Western history. Eric Voegelin comments that Hegel overcame diversity

> by interpreting the great civilizational societies as successive phases of the unfolding Geist, simply disregarding their simultaneity and succession in time. Especially striking is the treatment of Egypt and Mesopotamia. Chronologically, they would have to be placed at the beginning. But that would have disturbed the westward march of empire toward ever-increasing freedom, proceeding from China and India, through Persia, Greece, and Rome, to the Germanic World with its climax in the empire of the French Revolution. Hegel resolves the problem by demoting the early Near Eastern empires to subsections of the later Persian Empire that had conquered them; and the same fate he inflicts on Israel and Judah. By ingenious devices of this kind...he manages to herd the errant materials on the straight line that leads to the imperial present of mankind and to himself as its philosopher. Voegelin 1974:66f.

Here Voegelin speaks of 'historiogenesis' - the validation of any particular history through relating it uniquely and paradigmatically to the primordial origin of all history, of which it is now the fulfilment - as a type or structure of thought that 'proves of unsuspected importance...because of its virtual omnipresence' (p.67).
(He examines this type or structure in detail ibid. pp 59-113; it is clear on this reading that priscia theologia, philosophia perennis and Figurism are instances of historiogenesis.)

18. In different ways the work of such phenomenologists of religion as van der Leeuw and Eliade is geared towards re-founding an ontology that accomodates diversity within a single comprehensive grid. Van der Leuuw, in contradiction of his stated phenomenological methods, presents Christianity as the fulfilment of religion, drawing this assessment of his work from one of his commentators:

> It attempts a classification of all the basic forms and powers of religions, but van der Leuuw's scholarly work...deserves the verdict that it is a seemingly scholarly work carried out for apologetic and pastoral motives; its theological points contain its real message. Waardenburg, 1978:203.

Eliade presents an archetypal reading of religious structures that is universalistic in a way similar to Jung

(cf Eliade 1955 and 1958), though premissed on a theory of original revelation most strongly evident in primal religions, and on a reading of historically developed religions as caught in a process of decline; against diversity and difference he offers a kind of nostalgic utopianism.

19. This kind of move is not confined to Western thinkers as we shall see repeatedly: historiogenesis, even in obvious mythic form, is at work for instance in Buddhist apologists implanting a Buddhist way of life in China, or in Zhu Xi arguing for a single normative historical tradition, daotong. Contemporary apologists present some form of universalism as a way of undercutting diversity (here difference is always seen as a threat). D.T. Suzuki views the enlightened mind of the Zen adept as a manifestation of the universal Buddha-mind, capable of beng awakened in any cultural context. Radhakrishnan, 1940 and 1963 sees the universal principle of Hindu religion, sanatana dharma, as constituting the essential form of all religion. S.H. Nasr, 1975 and 1981, presents a neo-Platonist reading of Islam which derives from it a common core of all true religion. The inability here to experience <u>difference</u> will be one of our main points of engagement in this study.

20. Michel Corbin,1976, makes this point for Aquinas, in contrasting his more open form of inquiry with the system of Hegel. For Zhu Xi, as for any Chinese metaphysical thinker, it is doubtful that a totalising system is ever a matter of concern, partly becasue the language of being is not a language of universals (basic Confucian and Daoist approaches to language are nominalist), partly because Zhu emphasises mystery beyond rationality.

21. Twitchitt and Fairbank, Preface to <u>The Cambridge History of China</u>, Vol.10 Part 1 p.vi, (Cambridge, 1978).

22. From "Crisis as Transition" in Amin, 1982: 52-3. Eliade views the assimilation of non-Western religions as a new humanism and a new renaissance. Cf his essay 'A New Humanism', Eliade, 1969: 1-11, and the following statement:

> Orientalism was a new version of the Renaissance, the discovery of new sources and the return to forgotten, abandoned sources. Perhaps, without knowing it, I was in search of a new, wider humanism, bolder than the humanism of the Renaissance, which was too dependent on the models of mediterranean classicism. Perhaps, too, without realising it clearly, I had understood the true lesson of the Renaissance: the broadening of the cultural horizon, and the reconsideration of man's situation in a wider perspective. What, at first glance, is further from the Florence of Marsilio Ficino than Calcutta, Benares, or Rishikesh? Nevertheless, I found myself there because, as was the case with the humanists of

> the Renaissance, a provincial image of man didn't really satisfy me, and because, ultimately, I dreamed of rediscovering the model of a 'universal man' Eliade, 1978:17.

This comment can only now be read, however, in the context of the 'death of humanism' debates focussed in structuralist and post-structuralist thinking. The options for humanism or post-humanism will engage us later.

23. Although the Jinsi Lu is a compendium of writings from other neo-Confucian philosophers (compiled by Zhu Xi and his friend Lu Cuqian) rather than an original composition in the sense in which Aquinas' two Summae are, its arrangement bears the impress of Zhu Xi's understanding of neo-Confucianism, and any difficulties within it were frequently elucidated by reference to other of his writings. Translations have been made by Graf,1953, and Chan,1967. Graf speaks of it as the 'neo-Confucian Summa.'

24. For useful surveys of recent developments in Thomist thought, cf J. Hennessey 'Leo XIII's Thomistic revivial: A Political and Philosophical Event', and G.A. McCool, 'Twentieth Century Scholasticism', in Tracy, 1978:185-197 and 198-221. And in further detail cf John, 1966. Significant figures for consideration are Gilson and Maritain within neo-Thomism, and Lonergan, Rahner, and Coreth within transcendental Thomism. Of seminal import for rahner and Coreth (though not so for Lonergan) has been Joseph Marechal's quest for a rapprochement between Kantianism and Thomism, Le Point de Départ de la Metaphysique (Louvain,5 volumes)

25. In Korea neo-Confucianism in general, and Zhu Xi's thought in particular, were of seminal import in establishing the norms of culture and topics of learning that constituted orthodoxy during the Yi dynasty (1392 - 1910), with the Jinsi Lu eventually becoming the subject of important commentaries by Yi I (1536 - 84), Kim Chang-saeng (1548 - 1631), and Chong Yop (1563 - 1625). For a consideration of the historical background to acceptance of Zhu Xi's thought in the Yi dynasty, and to neo-Confucianism's usurpation of the previously privileged position of Buddhism, cf the relevant sections in Hulbert 1962, and Han 1970. On philosoplhical developments cf Lee Wu-song 1973 and Yi Tae-jiu 1973; and in fuller detail cf the essays in de Bary and Haboush,1985.

In Japan Zhu Xi's thought made an early appearance, and in 1333 discussion took place at Go-Daigo's court as to whether it should be accepted 'as a basis for the policy of the new government' Sansom 1964:70. The new government, however, did not last, with the result that neo-Confucianism, though of continuing interest to Buddhists as a syllabus of culture, proved to be of no political import until the Tokugawa period; then, with Ieyasu's appointment of Hayashi Razan as Confucian adviser to the Shogunate in 1608, Zhu Xi's ideas began to be

employed as a coherent and acceptable system of thought, and neo-Confucianism rose to a prominence similar to that which it enjoyed in China and Korea. In time more commentaries on the Jin Si Lu were produced in Japan than in either China or Korea (though they did not arrive at the same level of philosophical discussion or elucidation that obtained in both of those contexts); standard amongst these was the work of Kaibara Ekken (1630-1714), the Kinshi roku biko (Notes on the Jinsi Lu for Further Investigation). On the development of neo-Confucianism in Japan, cf the relevant sections in C. Chang 1958 and 1961; cf also Hall "The Confucian Teacher in Tokugawa Japan" in Nivison and Wright 1959:268-301, Nakai 1980, Spae 1967, and more generally Maruyama 1975.

For more recent developments in neo-Confucianism cf the final sections in Chang op. cit., the last chapter in Fung 1953 and Briere 1956. On twentieth century Confucians cf Alitto 1979 and Masson 1985. Tu 1974 provides a good overview of the conterporary positive re-readings of neo-Confucianism put forward by Qian Mu and Mou Zongsan. With others, Tu is committed to a current renewal of Confucian and neo-Confucian traditions, and one statement of his position can be found in his essay "Toward a Third Epoch of Confucian Humanism," Eber 1986:3-21.

26. For Aquinas, philosophy was the product of reason alone, without support of Christian faith and revelation. It could include what was later called natural theology, or the understanding of God achieved by rational reflection. Aristotle was the epitome of the philosopher, referred to by Aquinas simply as "the philosopher." The Christian revelation fulfilled the philosopher's quest, providing knowledge of God and his purposes that philosophy could not achieve, and also serving, through symbolism and ritual, as a means of salvation for all. (Aquinas argued that, other considerations apart, revelation was necessary since not all had the intelligence to become philosophers, an important point given, for instance, the Boethian definition of the human person as individua substantia rationalis naturae, and given the premium set on rationality in Aquinas' own work). The primacy that Aquinas accorded to revelation over rationality is well-evidenced by the following remark:

> Not one of the pre-Christian philosophers" he said in his explanation of the Apostolic creed, "could with all his power of thought know so much about God as a simple woman since the advent of Christ knows through faith." Grabmann, 1928:50.

What for Aquinas was a distinction between reason and faith would now appear more as a distinction between two cultural traditions (Greek and Hebraic), two forms of faith, and two interpretations of reason; and the argument that one might "fulfil" the other cannot so easily be made.

27. He wrote roughly 1000 poems, which are collected in Zhuzi wenji (also called Zhuzi daquan) (Collected Literary works of Master Zhu). A few of these are translated in Chan, 1975; Li, 1972 provides a study of Zhu's poetic activity, and cf also Lynn "Chu Hsi as Literary Theorist and Critic", Chan, 1986b: 337-354. A survey of Zhu's writings can be found in SBl.

28. Cf for instance his Collationes Dominicales (Sunday Sermons) and De Duobus Praeceptis Caritatis et Decem Legis Praeceptis (On the Two Commandments of Love, and the Ten Commandments). Weisheipl, 1975: 355-405 provides a full lising of the authentic works of Aquinas.

29. Cf in particular the commentaries on the Gospels of Matthew and John, and also the Catena aurea Super Quattuor Evangelia, an explanation of the four gospels using extensive commentaries from Patristic sources.

30. Of particular importance here are the commentaries on the Ethics and Metaphysics.

31. Although Aquinas' use of Aristotle separated him from the Augustinian tradition preserved by Bonaventure and the Franciscans, he still recognized Augustine as the greatest of the Latin Fathers. Commentary on Augustine, as on John Chrysostum, can be found throughout his major writings.

32. Cf the In Dionysium de Divinis Nominibus (Exposition of Dionysius' "On the Names of God.")

33. His commentary on the Four Books of Sentences of Peter Lombard, written between 1253 and 1255, was the first of Aquinas' major works in systematic theology, the others being the two Summae.

34. Certainly Aquinas acknowledges in various ways that human understanding develops, and that one aspect of this development is the form of historical progression. However, insofar as he sees the Christian scriptures as a past revelation of eternal truths, progression always takes the form of re-appropriating what has already been shown. The idea of knowledge as a dynamic process of discovery, as understood in the West since the rise of an experimental scientific method, is not present.

35. This point has been made by Reu Jiyu, although the claim is disputed by Fung Yu-lan; cf Ren 1980, and also Ren, "Chu Hsi and Religion", Chan, 1986b:355-376.
On the question of the daotong cf for instance Ching 1974b. Zhu Xi's understanding and definition of an orthodox Confucian tradition is crucial to his philosophy, as we shall see later.

36. Only the Analects, the sayings attributed to Confucius himself, had been of major importance in Confucianism

before the late Tang/early Song (ie before about the +10th century). The Mencius, together with the Great learning and Doctrine of the Mean, only became central in consequence of the development of Buddhism, and in relation to the doctrines of mind, and of the innate goodness of the mind or of human nature, which certain Buddhist schools stressed. For Zhu Xi these early Confucian texts represented a specifically Confucian source for such ideas, and hence a way of validating the Confucian tradition against Buddhism. [The Daxue and Zhongyong were originally two chapters in the Liji (Collection of Rituals), and were given independent canonical status by Zhu]. Zhu's famous edition and commentary on the Four Books (the Sishi jizhu), which he was still revising at his death, constitutes the completion of his philosophical position and have a similar status to Aquinas' Summa theologiae, though in places they are modified by comments in the Yulei (Classified Conversations).

37. For further detains on the texts cf SB1; and for further on specific individuals cf SB.

38. The tradition of Yulei derives from Buddhism, particularly from Chan (Zen), and marks the point when the scriptural tradition ceased to be central, and when the enlightened teacher came instead to be seen as the manifestation of Buddha-nature: to record his sayings thus became a crucial way of preserving the dharma. On this cf Yanagida Seizan "The "Recorded Sayings" Texts of Chinese Chan Buddhism", Lai and Lancaster, 1983:185-205. This emphasis on the enlightened Buddhist teacher stimulated and paralleled the neo-Confucian emphasis on the sage.

39. This, the Zhizhi tongjian gangmu, was planned by Zhu as a morally didactic abridgement of Sima Guang's Zizhi tongjian (cf above p.8). Zhu's inspiration here was the moral intention ascribed to Confucius in his (alleged) exposition of the Chunqiu (Spring & Autumn Annals): to tell history by alotting appropriate praise and blame to individuals and events, and to leave out of account whatever did not serve this pedaogy. For further on Confucius and the Chunqiu cf chapter 3.

40. The question of narcissism will concern us in various ways. Chasseguet-Smirgel 1985b , presents the idea of a healthy recapitulation of narcissism in the ego-ideal as the necessary means towards establishing and engaging in life-projects. Bataille's project of excess - the movement from restricted to general economy, cf Derrida, 1978: 251ff, - might be read on one account as an attempt to break the circle of narcissism only by return to an original relation with the mother. Relations between Platonic eros and self-love will be central for us later. Throughout his work - eg in his reading of Levi-Strauss, Derrida 1978:292, - Derrida observes the power of

narcissism at play in structuring ethnographic enquiry, where the surpassing innocence of primal cultures becomes the excellence of a lost ideal.

41. Cooper, 1975:89, argues for "flourishing" as an appropriate translation of Aristotle's eudaimonia, which captures well the meaning of the term. Aquinas incorporated Aristotle on eudaimonia, but extended its reference theologically on the basis of such concepts as resurrection and everlasting life. Despite the rhapsodic note, "eternal flourishing" expresses precisely the goal of human life (ultimately, of cosmic life) as Aquinas perceived it.

42. For a listing and consideration of various translations of ren cf Chan 1975b.

43. The notion that ren might be a cosmic rather than merely human virtue (in loose comparison with the way in which for Aquinas amor and appetitus naturalis can be predicated univerasally and analogically) is a perhaps controversial reading which we will consider later.

44. On this point in general cf for instance Green, 1979. Cf also Derrida's various writings on Artaud, as for instance "The Theater of Cruelty and the Closure of Representation" in Derrida 1978: 232 - 250. While we may say that theatre opens the field of repression, that comment must also be held within the problematic of the theatre as representation: a marking, then, that only lets slip the repressed as it tries to veil it. Artaud and Derrida are clear, with Nietzsche, on this point: that after Aeschylus/Sophocles Western theatre became the stage of (rational) man - thus Artaud:

> Man is quite ill in Aeschylus, but still thinks of himself somewhat as a god and does not want to enter the membrane, and in Euripides, finally, he splahses about in the membrane, forgetting where and when he was a god.
> from Le theatre et l'anatomie, La rue, July 1946, quoted Derrida ibid. p. 233.

While Derrida tracks the links between "cruelty" and the idea of presence - thus showing Artaud's inevitable complicity in the world be critiques - he focusses also that journey to the other shore of "Eastern" theatre that Artaud makes in order to loosen the constraints on Western man, identifying thus a stage in that search for the fascinating mirror of the East that we have already remarked above.

45. The skill of Zhuangzi as a philosopher of play and reversal is well brought out in Wu, 1982; I shall say more on the problem of Zhuangzi's naturalism in chapter 4. For a first linking of Zhuangzi and Derrida cf Yeh, 1983.

46. Aquinas is clear that, as a pedagogical principle, the movement of ideas should be from first principles. Zhu Xi,

however, was uncertain as to whether the text of the Jinsi Lu should begin with a metaphysical statement, or whether this might not be too abstruse and disconcerting, with first attention better given to matters of ethical and social concern.

47. Derrida exposes the presuppositions of foundationalism at various points in his enquiries; perhaps the best occasion is in his essay "The Supplement of Copula: Philosophy before Linguistics," Derrida: 1982: 175 - 205. Here he shows the inevitable language-bound feature of metaphysical and ontological categories, and the way in which, though particular to a given language, they are inevitable to any thinking about Being insofar as thinking is linguistic. His critique is highly nuanced, particularly since he seeks to correct a non-rigorous presentation of the linguistic nature of foundational ontological categories offered by Benveniste in his essay "Categories of Thought and Language" (in Benveniste, Problems in General Linguistics, tr. Mary E. Meek, Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1971). Derrida notes that Kant, Hegel and others had already accused Aristotle of a kind of empiricism as regards his basic categories (ten in all in Categories IV): Aristotle had just picked them up as already given to him in the (Greek) language. But Derrida remarks the same problem as regards Kant's categories:

> When Kant proposes a system of categories governed by the "faculty of judgement," which is the same as the "faculty of thought," is grammar still the guiding thread of the investigation? p. 186.

Derrida's inquiry - fnally and necessarily aporetic on the relations of thought and language - stresses the rigorousness of the foundational enterprise as it works not to be simply empirical, but critical in its basic categories. He also raises in a more engaging manner than that we have already observed in Of Grammatology, (cf above), the question of a necessary link between the verb "to be" and the very possibility of a "metaphysics", focussing on the question whether there can be a metaphysics in a language that lacks that verbal function:

> Is there a "metaphysics" outside the Indo-European organization of the function "to be?" This is not in the least an ethnocentric question. It does not amount to envisaging that other languages might be deprived of the surpasssing mission of philosophy and metaphysics but, on the contrary, avoids projecting outside the West very determined forms of "history" and "culture" p. 199.

For a consideration of the linguistic arguments here as they relate to Chinese language and philosophy cf the

seminal essays of Graham, and for a summation of the issues that I think Derrida would resist for its apparently cavalier point, but which nonetheless grasps his position without pursuing its intricacies, cf Rorty:

> No sooner does one discover the categories of the pure understanding for a Newtonian age than somebody draws up another list that would do nicely for an Aristotelian or an Einsteinian one.
> Rorty,1982:167-8.

48. Cf for instance how Prigogine and Stengers identify the (still operative) primary presupposition of classical science:

> [T]he science of Laplace which, in many respects is still the classical conception of science today, a description is objective to the extent to which the observer is excluded and the description itself is made from a point lying de jure outside the world, that is, from the divine viewpoint to which the human soul, created as it was in God's image, had access at the beginning. thus classical science still aims at discovering the unique truth about the world, the one languange that will decipher the whole of nature.
> Prigogine and Stengers 1984:52.

49. For a survey of positions here, cf for instance Zhang 1980-81; we will consider the issue in detail in subsequent chapters.

50. For further relevant work here cf also, for instance, Kofman 1985.

51. The idea of philosophy as conversation is central to the Confucian tradition; for some considerations cf Holzman 1956. And for a recent Western reading of philosophy in this manner cf Rorty 1980:389-394.

52. Obviously Derrida's comment requires reading in terms of a specific understanding of "metaphysical desire", and we will return to an assessment of the point after examining some of the structures of metaphysics within the western tradition; particularly, there is perhaps a distinction to be made between 'philosophical desire' and 'metaphysical desire.' For examples of women writers reworking the issues of metaphysical/philosophical desire in different ways cf Kofman 1985, and Spivak 1987.

53. Though cf for instance how Mencius draws a parallel between the uniqueness of the jilin in the animal world, Lau 1983:80, and the uniqueness of Confucius as sage in the human world, Mencius 2A2. And for a further reading on the jilin cf Izushi 1937.

54. Zhu Xi specifically excludes any aspect of aggressivity from the jilin, as from the concept ren. In

the West the lion and the unicorn were both taken as symbols of Christ. Zhu Xi, by contrast, makes a specific distinction between what the lion and the unicorn implicitly represent, criticising the interpretation of ren proferred by the Hunan school (of neo-Confucians) (where ren is read as a aspect of mind, xin, not nature, xing) as constituting a mistake similar to that of mistaking the unicorn for the lion. As one commentator puts it:

> According to (Chu Hsi), there was a certain Wang Jih-hsiu who lived during the transitional period between Northern and Southern Sung (1127 -1279). Commenting on a passage in Mencius 2A.2 which proclaims that "the unicorn is the most superior among all beasts", Wang asserted that the unicorn was but a different name for the lion. Though there is no apparent relationship between Wang Jih-hsiu and the Hunan scholars, Chu is here using the obvious blunder of the former to ridicule what appears to him to be an analogous mistake of the latter. The unicorn has been known as the animal of jen since ancient times, and has been idealized by the Chinese people as an animal with a sentient spirit as well as a messenger of peace. That it is called the animal of jeu and the king among beasts is due to the belief that it never steps on growing grass and never eats living things, and that it is a noncombative, gentle and tranquil animal. It is definitely not a fierce, wild, and threatening beast like the lion.
> Sato Hitoshi, "Chu Hsi's Treatise on Jen, in Chan, 1986b: 223.

55. William's translations were an important resource for Aquinas who, having no more than a modicum of Greek, relied on the Latin test. [Cf Weisheipl 1974: 163: "I presume it goes without saying that Thomas knew practically no Greek, except for a few technical words and phrases"]. The received tradition has been that William undertook his translations at the request of Aquinas (ad instantium fratris Thomas), but this is strongly denied by Weisheipl, who remarks that Aquinas readily made use of William's work, but that

> this is not the same as saying that William made these translations ad instantium fratris Thomas or that there was a "collaboration" between these two scholars. It would seem that William of Moerbeke turned simply and spontaneously to translating before he met Thomas and continued long afterward.
> Weisheipl, 1974: 152.

56.For consideration of the development of some of the formative concepts of the courtly love tradition, cf the articles by Denomy.

57.For specific details on the Jewish reading of Bernard, and for further consideration of the relations between

monastic concepts of love and courtly love, cf Leclerq 1979.

58. Cf Kodera 1980.

59. For a general survey of such early contacts as did exist between China and the West cf Needham 1954: 150 - 248. On the question of possible relations between Han dynasty China and Imperial Rome cf Hirth 1885. For the medieval period the two classic studies remain those of Yule-Cordier 1913-16 and Bretschneider 1888, but cf also Olschki 1960 and Lach 1965: 20-48.

60./ The earlier missionary work of such Franciscans as William of Rubruck and John of Montecorvino did mark some important contacts. William was in Karakorum, the court of the Great Khan, in 1254, and witnessed a religious debate between Christians (Nestorian), Buddhists, and Muslims. John was in the Khan's court in Cambaluc (Khambaliq, Peking) from 1294 until his death sometime between 1328 and 1333: he established a church, and converted many to christianity. This contact, however, was primarily with the Mongol people, rather than with the Chinese. For details of Latourette 1929: 65-73, Moule 1930, Olschki 1972, and Olschki 1960: 40-96. For William's account of his journeys cf Rockhill 1900, and for further details on John cf Yule-Cordier 1913-16 Vol 3 p. 3ff, together with translations of John's letters ibid. pp45ff.

61. Certain scientific and technical discoveries, and the principles underlying them, were transmitted from China to the West before or during the medieval period. (The transmission of various alchemical practices is particularly interesting in this respect: a detailed treatment can be found in Needham 1980: 323 - 509). The serious exchange of any philosophical notions, however, dates, as I have said, to the time of the Jesuit missionaries. In this respect, commenting on a suggestion in Needham 1954: 157 of a possible earlier European awareness of Chinese philosophical notions, Lach remarks

> Vague rumours of Confucian and Taoist ideas may have reached Rome (in the early Christian centuries), but no clear evidence of such transmission exists. cf Lach 1965: 17.

62.On influences via Sufism cf again the articles by Denomy, particularly 1953a. The interaction of different mystical traditions here is complex, and on its own provides material for sevral different studies. In terms of devotional mysticism, the first influence is of Christianity on Islam: with its concept of the radical transcendence of Allah, Islam did not at first possess the resources for that love-mysticism developed in Christianity in consequence of the doctrine of divine incarnation. The topic is studied in Smith 1937, and Zaehner comments that

she

> has shown how indebted early Muslim mysticism is, with its overwhelming emphasis on the love of God, to the thought of the great Christian mystics of a slightly earlier time. Zaehner 1960:92

Zaehner himself, in looking at Hindu influences on Sufism, considers more how the Sufi doctrine of annihilation in Allah is linked with vedanta rather than bhakti (cf his chapter "Vedanta in Muslim Dress", Zaehner 1960:86-109). The question of influences between Hindu bhakti and Sufi mysticism is as yet little studied - Rizvi 1978:322-96 looks at developments that occurred on the Indian continent. Hodgson plays down the influence of Sufism on the troubadours (Hodgson 1974, vol.2 pp.363-4), whilst viewing Hindu bhakti and the love mysticism of Christianity and Islam as parallel and independent, rather than interacting, traditions. His cautio observation is that

> Relations beteween Islam and Hinduism on the religious level are as yet only fragmentarily studied... An adequate theoretical basis for such studies is still wanting. Ibid. p.558.

(This does seem overly cautious, not only in the light of Rizvi's work, but also in terms of the studies of Denomy.)

63. For an example of Kalidasa's love-mysticism cf Kalidasa 1976.

64. For a general introduction to the issues cf Lieu 1979b.

65. Reflections on this point can be found in Mungello 1976, where he notes (p.404) Zhu Xi's observation that Tian

> sometimes designates the blue vault (tsang-tsang), sometimes it signifies the sovereign worker of all things (chu-tsai) and sometimes it denotes reason (li) alone.

66.Schafer 1963 provides a brilliant reading of the openness of Tang culture to foreign ideas and cultural influences; and by the Tang period buddhism had already provoked the most profound opening of chinese culture that was to occur before the modern impact of the West (indeed, it could be argued that Buddhist influence was greater than that of the West has been so far).

67. This aspect of Aquinas' style won a Church condemnation of parts of his work in 1277 (rescinded at his canonisation 50 years later) cf Weisheipl 1974:333ff, and Callus 1946. Zhu Xi was also at first accused of propagating a false learning.

68. For historical background to the rise of Sufism - cf Hodgson, 1974, Vol. I 392 - 409, & Vol. II, 201 - 254.

69. Cf Scholem, 1974: 119

> As from the year 1200, the Kabbalists began to emerge

> as a distinct mystical group which, while not numerically significant, had nonetheless attained considerable prominence in many parts of Southern France and Spain. The main tendencies of the new movement are clearly defined, and the modern student may without difficulty trace its development from the early stages about 1200 to the Golden Age of Kabbalism in Spain at the close of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

70. Emphasis on the fact that neo-Confucianism was, from its origins, as much a practical programme in spirituality as a coherent system of moral, political and metaphysical theory, has recently been a central strand in (Western) neo-Confucian studies. Cf for instance de Bary 'Neo-Confucian Cultivation and the Seventeenth Century 'Enlightenment'' in de Bary (1975): 141-216, Taylor (1978) and (1975), the papers from the symposium 'Modes of Self-Cultivation in Traditional China' in JCP 6 (1979), and de Bary (1981). And cf also how Metzger, who in his study of neo-Confucianism pays attention in particular to its metaphysics, emphasises that this is not its central feature:

> The Neo-Confucian tradition, writes Professor de Bary, 'even more than a set moral code or philosophical system, was a life-style, an attitude of mind, a type of character formation, and a spiritual ideal that eluded precise definition.' Therefore the 'metaphysical superstructure' of Neo-Confucianism...was not its central aspect. Metzger (1977): 54-5.

As we have boted,Ren Jiyu argues that the rise of neo-Confucianism in fact amounted to the founding of a religion; cf Ren, "Chu Hsi and Religion", Chan, 1986a: 355-376.

71. For a reading of aspects of Song painting cf Sullivan.

72.It was not until his mid-twenties that Zhu settled on the Confucian tradition as the orthodox way, after an earlier experimentation with Buddhist ideas. Aquinas, by contrast, seems to have been unswerving in the style of his Christian commitment (at least, according to both hagiographical and scholarly traditions) from the time he went to study at the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino at the age of 5.

73. As a member of the newly founded Dominican order, the Dominican principle contemplata aliis tradere (to hand on to others the fruits of one's own contemplation) served as the inspiration behind his work.

74. On jing-zuo in general cf de Bary art.cit pp170-72, and Taylor (1978): 77-88. Different forms of meditative practice were covered by the term, some approved by Zhu Xi,

and some not. Research at present does not show when and how a clearly Confucian advocacy of such practice emerged, though its roots lie in Buddhist, and also Daoist, meditative practices. Of jingzuo in general de Bary says

> It was common to begin and end the day with a period of quiet-sitting, but not infrequently this kind of meditation was also practised as a preparation for study or in alternation with study to refresh and restore the mind. Art. cit p.172

On the religious life and practice of Zhu Xi more generally cf Chan 1987.

75. Of course, "wisdom" and "intuitive knowledge" are not obviously clear or uncomplicated terms. All I mean by them here initially is a highly synthesising form of understanding that is derive as much from the practice of meditation and moral cultivation as it is from study and logical reflection. The details of this point - which is crucial for an understanding of Aquinas and Zhu Xi - will be considered in later chapters. For a valuable recent enquiry on the topics of rationality and wisdom cf Maxwell, 1987.

CHAPTER 2 NOTES

1. We noted in Chapter 1 the difficulties attending any singular concept of tradition. Here we would stress that what goes under the name "Confucianism" is in fact a variety of different life-stances, at times complementary at times in conflict, within which, apart from the Analects, various foundational texts and scriptural resources are given prominence.

2. For analyses that have proved of fundamental importance here cf Levenson, 1958 and Wright, M.C 1966. Bauer, 1976, provides a complex reading of Chinese traditions that focusses the conservative role played by Confucianism, and the reasons underpinning its failure in the present century. Despite current attempts to develop Confucianism as state orthodoxy in Singapore, despite its continued vitality in Taiwan, and despite the strong reading in recent Western scholarship of neo-Confucianism as liberal humanism (cf de Bary, 1981 and 1983), the future of Confucianism as anything other than an historical legacy seems extremely limited. Tied to the particularities of the Chinese world, the Confucian tradition has failed historically to develop those strategies and forms of hermeneutic that allowed Christianity and Buddhism, for instance, to take root in different cultural soil, and that gave to those traditions a greater resource to respond to modernity and to cultural diversity.

3. Consideration of the various schools and styles of philosophy that emerged in the Axial Age can be found in Plott, 1977. A comparative study of the historical background and contexts in the different cultures can be found in Farmer, 1977: 82-124. Voegelin, 1974: 1 ff. and passim provides a strong criticism of Jaspers and the notion of an Axial Age - together with the presupposition it involves - and I shall return to this below.

4. Bauer ties the axial significance of Confucius precisely to his formulation of the concept ren:

> His great discovery was man and the virtue of "Humanity" (there is no distinction between the two words in ancient Chinese). However nebulous it might be in every respect, this concept brought a shift in thought of epochal proportions. Bauer 1976: 20.

And in an appended note here he adds:

> The "Axial Period" which Karl Jaspers (Origin and Goal of History) believes he has discovered for all of Eurasia during the middle of the first century BC can thus actually be verified as regards China. p. 429, n. 35.

Schwartz suggests that it is the significance of Confucius within a larger movement of cultural reflection in Zhou China, and the comparable force of that movement to movement in other cultures that is the major point - Schwartz 1985: 2-3.

5. The Shijing - Classic of Poetry, Book of Songs or Odes - is one of the Six Classics, together with the Shujing or Shangshu - Classic of History, Book of Documents, the Chunqiu Spring and Autumn Annals -, Yijing - Classic or Book of Changes, Yuejing - Classic of Music, - and a text on Rituals; these were reckoned to have been written or edited by Confucius. The Yuejing is now lost, although parts of it are taken to survive in one chapter of the Liji, Record of Rituals. The original text on rituals is also lost, but parts of it are perhaps incorporated in three texts on rituals that do survive, the Liji, Zhouli, and Yili.
The older portions of the Yijing definitely antedate Confucius, and were held in evident respect by him, but the text has nothing to say on re and is not directly significant for us here. The Chunqiu is pre-Confucian for the most part (it covers court events in Confucius' home state of Lu from -721 to -463), and may well have been edited by Confucius. Parts of the received text of the Shujing are pre-Confucian. The 305 odes of the Shijing are of an early date, and reckoned to represent a selection from an original total of over 3000; tradition has it that the selection was compiled by Confucius himself. - for translations cf Waley, 1960, Karlgren, 1950.

6. The suggestion is made by Karlgren, 1964 110, where he takes  as an early form for  .

7. In examining the textual basis for the early use of ren, and in the conclusion I have reached, I have drawn considerably on the excellent study by Lin Yü-sheng, 1974-75.

8. The cultural location of the odes is obviously crucial in determining their intentionality. Granet, for instance, attempted to argue that the odes were in many cases representative more of folk or popular, than aristocratic, traditions in Zhou culture. This position, however, is rejected by Karlgren:

> the idea that these odes are pure folksongs, culled by the music-masters from the lips of the people in the various feudal states (an old idea already advanced by Si-ma Ts'ien), is quite untenable. The odes are so well-elaborated, with such a strict metre and rhythm, such a consistent and strict (even rigid) rime system, and often such sophisticated and 'upper-class' expressions that it is entirely excluded that they could be the products of improvising uneducated farmers. This is doubly clear if we compare this elaborate literature with the

> contemporaneous prose literature (bronze inscriptions), which still labours with all the heaviness of a but little developed literary art. The 'culling' of the music-masters was certainly limited to the picking up of...popular themes...the poems must in their entirety be the products of well-trained, educated members of the gentry. Karlgren 1942: 75-6.

Maspero, however, supports the style of analysis followed by Granet, and argues that the odes do give an indirect access to folk traditions:

> These songs are unfortunately not, it seems, popular songs themselves, but at every point they borrow the themes of peasant songs, of which they give us an idea. 1981: 210

Chen Shih-hsiang, 1974, and C.H. Wang, 1974, are both in line with Maspero's approach, arguing a strong folk or popular origin for many of the odes, and emphasising their place in dance, community rituals, and oral tradition. However, Wang's argument for formulaic composition (in development of Parry's and Lord's arguments on the oral tradition preceding Homer), requires rather than refutes the existence of trained singers and musicians who memorised the odes, though there is no requirement of an immediate equation between trained singers and court singers.

9. It will not be possible for us to study the various social and cultural factors at work in this transitional period of Chinese history; a very worthwhile orientation is that provided by Hsu, 1968, as is Creel's history of the Western Zhou, Creel 1970; for some central aspects of cultural development cf Fehl 1971, and on religion cf Bilsky 1975.

10. For any religion there are varying degrees and forms of tension between the sense of mystery and its rational management. We have already encountered Weber's rationalist reading of Confucianism, and that is certainly an important part of the picture - indeed, Keightley reads aspects of this back into the Shang period, speaking of a Shang state permeated with a commitment to the ancestors, strongly religious in the totality of its demands

> and yet we find that the commitment can be characterised as nonreligious, nonmysterious, and - because so explicitly goal directed - rational in its logic. The logic may be characterized...as "bureaucratic" in Max Weber's sense of the term. Keightley 1978b: 214.

Keightley's extended study of Shang divinatory practice maps well the details of cultic practice, Keightley 1978a, while Chang Tsung-tung 1970 portrays the texture of religious belief. Bauer, 1976: 3-9 provides a good initial sense of the Shang world.

11. The mandate (<u>ming</u>), which was given to the King

specifically, was passed on by him to his representatives and supporters, so that all rule throughout the Zhou domain was in a strict sense an extension of kingly rule:

> The King charged Hu of Shao
> (wang ming Hu Shao)
> (And this charge was published far and wide)
> "When Wen and Wu received their mandate
> The Duke of Shao was their support."
> Mao 262; Waley, 1960: 131

12. Cf for instance T'ang Chun-i 1961; and cf Bauer's remarks:

> Quite a number of documents that have come down to us clearly show that the Chou engaged in very intensive political propaganda which suddenly introduced an entirely new category never mentioned previously: morality. Bauer 1976: 12.

The moral point at stake is that the Zhou claimed the Shang had lost the support of Heaven through moral failure, and tianming was argued as the specifically moral authority to rule.
Cheng Kwang-Chih notes that, while the specific doctrine of tianming represents a Zhou concept, the notions on which it was based go back to the Shang at least, thus casting light on why the Shang might have accepted Zhou ideology. cf Chang 1983: 34.

13. Creel reads the doctrine of the Mandate as realpolitik, and ascribes its invention as a piece of theological ideology to the Duke of Zhou. In considering how the Shang might have come to accept the imposition of such an ideology, he examines the Zhou practices of forced movement of population, and destruction of the Shang cultural heritage, as means whereby the Shang were "encouraged" to forget their own traditions and to accept Zhou ways. For an extended consideration of Creel 1970: 81-100.

14. There is oviously an issue at stake here over where one decides to locate the emergence of specific forms of intentionality that might be deemed moral: as early as the -12th century, with the Duke of Zhou, or in the two hundred years prior to Confucius. There seems little doubt that, whatever its ideological structure, a new moral space is opened by the doctrine of tianming, but its implementation is still within an unproblematised social framework. The form of moral intentionality I am focussing on for the later period, however, is tied to a set of social changes involving extensive questioning of received norms by specific individuals. [Here we can perhaps compare the mandating authority of the Duke of Zhou with the status of Moses and the 10 commandments, just as we can link Confucius with the more speculative movement of the major prophets].

15. Jacobsen 1976 gives a detailed reading of the process in Mesopotamian religions whereby reflection on suffering

led to a deepening awareness of the value of the person, and also move significantly to an increased sense of the otherness of God.

16. The notion of a human life bound by moral considerations as a shift from earlier ritualistic considerations emerges in Fehl's study of li (ritual, etiquette, correct behaviour), where the shifting designations of this central concept carry the shifts in changing patterns of culture; cf Fehl 1971

17. Cf his essay "Religious Evolution" in Bellah 1976.

18. The first volume of Voegelin's philosophy of history Order and History begins with a set of theoretical considerations on the development of forms of symbolisation as the development of cultural orders, though the most detailed considerations are to be found in volume four, where he engages in a rethinking of his philosophic procedure. Cf Voegelin 1956 and 1974, and in commentary Sandoz 1981.

19. Altekar 1962 provides an account of the shifting status of women within Hinduism, while Altekar 1934 looks in part at the position of women within education.

20 On the question of women within Buddhism cf Horner 1930 and Tali 1972.

21 This was worked out not just in terms of ethical and religious practice, but also via a metaphysic within which women were of inferior ontological status. For the Jains, to be reborn as a woman was a particular form of punishment for wrongdoing, and offered little chance of rebirth at a higher level.

22. On the development of Greek educational institutions in general cf Marrou 1956.

23. Aristotle, for instance, specifically claimed that woman was a deformed man, a point taken up by Aquinas independent of the Christian doctrine of original sin.

24. One reading of the Oresteia would in it a powerful consolidation of patriarchal culture, with a subordination through death of 'the feminine' in the figures of Iphigeneia and Clytaemnestra.

25. On this cf for instance Patai 1974.

26. These issues are dealt with in considerable detail, and with theoretical insight, in Voegelin 1954.

27. The reading of this issue is vexed. Bauer, for instance, suggests that the excesses of the Shang kings (to

which the Zhou referred as part of their claim that the Shang had lost the divine authority to rule) may in fact have represented "certain matriarchal orgiastic cults whose origin the Chou did not understand" Bauer I976: 12, and he remarks that Zhou patriarchy "differed from the Shang, where matriarchal elements still survived" p. 11. Eichhorn suggests that an early totemistic stage of religion (pre-dating the Shang) implied belief in a primal mother, Eichhorn 1976:1.

Chang summarizes the issues thus:

> Some believe in the existence of an archaic society in Chinese history, in which descent was traced through the maternal line and in which women commanded higher political status than men. This belief is based on two very different sources. The first is the nineteenth century evolutionist paradigm according to which every society goes through a matriarchal phase...The second source consists of scattered textual accounts of a society in the remote past in which mothers were known (or recognized) while fathers were not. If there was indeed such a stage in Chinese history, it must have occurred long before the Three Dynasties. We know of no actual clans for the Three Dynasties period that were not patrilineal. Chang 1983: 9n.1

28. Laozi, as we shall see, speaks of "returning to the mother"; cf for instance Chen, E.M. 1969.

29 Schafer 1968 examines how the creation of animal enclosures and hunting parks marked a safe preserve for the encounter with animal powers, which were otherwise seen "as allied to the power of darkness, akin to the savage tribes that surrounded the old Middle Kingdom" p 319. In the hunt the glories of kingship and the needs of ritual were interlinked:

> Kings and barons killed leopards and deer, under carefully controlled conditions, to demonstrate their power and glory. p 319
>
> The book of Huai nan tzu ascribed the invention of animal preserves to T'ang, the divine founder of the Shang dynasty, giving the needs of ritual as his motive - the animals supplied meat offerings to the ancestral temples. p 321.

The link between hunting and warfare did not just exist for the elite: Creel observes that "(e)ven peasants who regularly tilled their fields might receive military training" and that this was given during "a great hunt which was used as training for warfare" Creel 1970: 285. On matters of individual heroic skill Schafer notes that "bears tempted the prowess of exceptional athletes" p 320.

29a. Takeuchi examines the different conjunctive uses of mei and concludes that "(c)omparing these antithetical

phrases, we are convinced that they all express external beauty of man or thing" Takeuchi 1965: 66; and reading ren in this light he remarks that ren "is a modifier admiring only external beauty" not a designator of "internal goodness such as conscientiousness" or benevolence ibid p. 66

30. This is the approach of Lin Yü-sheng, who notes that at the time of these two odes (both of which he dates about -770)

> there occured...a need among the Chinese people for finding a new word to stand for "manliness" or "manhood", which referred to a conception of man's distinctive quality...jen did mean "manly" (when it was used as an adjective) and "manliness" or "manhood" (when it was used as a noun) in referring to qualities conceptually regarded as those distinctively possessed by man...jen in Shu-yu-t'ien primarily connoted the daring quality of man without any moral implication. The daring quality of man must therefore be regarded as the substantive sense of the word jen during the time when the poem was composed." Lin 1974-5: 179

31. The arguments are reviewed in Zhang 1980-81, whose rpinciple object of attack is the reading of ren proposed by Guan Feng. For the Spring and Autumn period Guan identifies 3 types of ren, that of the slave owning class, the landowning class, and the common people. The position of the slave-owning class, synthesised by Confucius but developed before him, consists for Guan of "ceremonial yielding" (lirang), "loving one's kin" (aiqin), and "doing things as if attending a ritual sacrifice." Whether Guan's position is accepted or rejected, it should be noted that his substantive reading of ren is very different from the one we are following here as "manliness." That much said, the notion that we might be dealing with an aristocratic or slave-owning conception of "manliness" as normative for the Shijing world remains an open issue at this stage of our inquiry.

32. At one point, speaking of Shang expeditions against a specific tribe named Ren, Prusek notes:

> The campaigns against the Jen were major expeditions, one of which lasted as long as seven months...The chief of the Jen was captured and sacrificed to the gods. From the last period of the Shang a skull-bone has been preserved, with the inscription: Tsu I attacked the count Jen-fang...The question arises whether the name Jen is not a transcription of a foreign name elsewhere transcribed as Jung, adopted as a general term for barbarians. The phonetic difference between jen...and jung...is not so great as to exclude the possibility of both being transcriptions of the same name. It requires no stretch of the imagination to assume that the Chou

> transcribed this name as Jung and later, as thei power expanded, carried it throughout the eastern regions. Prusek 1971: 38

Prusek here goes beyond the idea of parallel meanings for ren and rong to suggest that they are different terms with the same designation, and reiterates the point elsewhere:

> the word Jung is a Chinese word simply meaning "bellicose." It is of course quite possible that the word has behind it the name of a certain tribe, perhaps the jen...who were fought by the Shang kings...We could imagine a similar sounding tribal name being written as the character for "bellicose" and then becoming the general term for the idea of "barbarian" among the Chou people. Ibid p210

33. There is an obvious tension between this suggestion and the reading of Prusek. It is not possible to engage in a full etymology of terms here, and I would simply note that the self-referential use of ren for the Shang and the reference to others as ren suggests a continuity of meaning that would seem to disallow a reading of ren as barbarian. That is not to say, though, that those other tribes called ren by the Shang did not come to be reviewed as rong by the Zhou.

34. Commenting on the strategies of exclusion by which certain groups separate others from the status of "humans" Derrida focusses on the prestige attached to the possession of a certain writing, and quotes Leroi-Gourhan's observation that

> in many human groups, the only word by which the members designate their ethnic group is the word 'man'. Derrida: 1976: 83-4.

35. The passage is quoted in Chang Kwang-chih 1980: 226-7

36. Cf also the assessment of Pulleyblank:

> Attempts to show from oracle bore inscriptions that...prisoners were...employed at forced labour seem very forced - though there is nothing inherently improbbly in it. Even if they were, it is difficult to believe that anything but doctrinaire preconceptions could lead anyone to think from the available evidence that this was on such a large scale as to make China a slave society. Pulleyblank 1958: 186

37. On the functions and status of the Shang king cf for instance Chao 1982: 53-73.

38. Thus Creel:

> The relationship between the Chou King and Heaven was conceived to be peculiarly intimate. There seems to be no evidence that the Shang King was ever called the "son of Ti," but the Chou King was the "son of

> Heaven." And this was not merely a formal title. A poem says of the King, literally, "may T'ien son him", that is, treat him as its son. If T'ien were in fact the former Kings as a body, this could explain the relationship perfectly." Creel ;970: 303.

39. For an account of the implications behind the forms of the different characters cf Creel 1970: 493ff. The stress that Heaven's Mandate is uncertain and unpredictable - a point evident in a number of the odes - was a powerful motive force in securing compliance with those moral practices that Heaven would find acceptable.

40. Cf the lament we have already noted

> "That blue one, Heaven,
> Takes all our good men.
> Mao 131; Waley, 1960: 311

The lines come in an ode lamenting the lives of those who had to die with their ruler (in this case the Duke Mu). Waley comments:

> "The extent to which Kings were followed into the grave by their servitors differed very much at various times and in various localities. The practice existed on a grand scale during the dynasty which preceded the Chou. It was disapproved of by the Confucians, but revived by the Ch'u when they conquered all China (middle of the third century BC). So far as I know it was never revived after the rise of the Han in 206 BC. Ibid p 312.

We will qualify this observation in the next chapter. The topic of human sacrifice in China is rarely treated without some measure of excuse or rationalisation. Pulleyblank, for instance, offers the extraordinary observation that "In historical times it was considered highly honourable to follow one's lord into the grave." Pulleyblank 1958: 186, and Mencius suggests a similar argument (cf below, chapter four). The force of ode 131, however, is its demonstration of the horror and fearfulness surrounding this entire practice.

41. We will see in chapter four how Mozi departs somewhat from this conception by viewing Heaven as an entirely creative power. An important issue in the background here is that Tian is not seen as a lawgiver, ie as a figure that establishes the physical universe according to fixed laws and patterns (Mozi again is a partial exception) and this marks an important contrast with the basic metaphorical structure of Western theology and physical science. For considerations cf Needham, 1951.

42. This is a very complex question that I do not intend to pursue here. Chang Kwang-chih, 1983, notes that there were several hundred clans during the Shang and Zhou perod, and that "the political landscape of ancient China was

dotted with hundreds of thousands of towns inhabited by members of discrete clans and lineages" p 32. If min later came to have the connotation of "the common people", then maybe we can distinguish powerful clans from those that gradually become less significant with min taking on the sense of powerlessness in contrast with ren; though the suggestion must remain tentative.

43. For a consideration cf Prusek "History and Epics in China and the West", Prusek 1970: 17-34.

44. Wang 1975 provides a very fruitful reading of a Chinese heroic tradition where, in redefining the epic process, he focusses on the centrality of cultural (wen) heroism rather than martial (wu) heroism.

45. Cf for instance James Liu 1967.

46. Cf for instance the lines from one of the odes:
Very clear-sighted was he and wise.
He assured his own safety. Mao 260; Wally 1960: 142
Waley comments thus:
> To assure one's own safety ('guard oneself') was one of the main avowed objects of Chou morality. The phrase occurs on numerous bronze inscriptions. Ibid.

47. Focussing on what he sees as the basic Chinese repudiation of a martial spirit, Wang comments on a position taken by Zhu Xi:
> "In the ancient times," Chu says, "one observed the start of a military expedition with the rite equivalent to funeral; when the call to arms came, all the warriors wept." The reluctance...is determined by Chinese ethics in general that almost repudiates martial spirit from heroism. The display of martial power (wu) is never as worthy as the exhibition of cultural eloquence (wen). In the sanctification of King Wu of Chou's military action against the Shang, Confucianism judges the conquest incomplete until the weapon is put away and the rite performed appropriately. op. cit. p 27

48. Cf Takeuchi 1965: 67-8; and Lin Yü-sheng 1974-5; 199-200.

Chapter 3 Notes

1. Cf also how, in praising the virtue (ren) of Guan Zhong Confucius identifies him in particular as a saviour from the descent into barbarism:

> Zigong said, 'I don't suppose Guan Zhong was a man of ren (renzhe). Not only did he not die for Prince Jiu, but he lived to help Duke Huan who had the prince killed.'
> The Master said, "Guan Zhong helped Duke Huan to become the leader of the feudal lords and to save the Empire from collapse. To this day, the common people still enjoy the benefit of his acts. Had it not been for Guan Zhong, we might well be wearing our hair down and folding our robes to the left (ie as the barbarians)." An 14.17.

2. There are various crucial background issues involved in determining what it might have meant for Confucius to say that he was "for the Zhou." One issue is that Lu, the home state of Confucius, can perhaps be viewed as the heartland of Zhou culture after the loss of the Western Zhou capital in the -8th century. Fung Yu-lan has this comment:

> The Tso Chuan...tells us concerning an envoy from Wu, that it was when he visited Lu that "he observed the music of Chou"...and again that when Han Hsuan Tzu was visiting Lu, he examined the books of the Great Historian, and saw the symbols of the I and the Ch'un Ch'iu of Lu, whereupon he said: "The ceremonials of Chou are complete in Lu, and now I comprehend the virtue of the Duke of Chou and how it was that the Chou became kings"...Culturally speaking, it is evident that Lu must have been a miniature reflection of the ancestral Chou. Especially was this the case when, after the first few centuries of its rule, the House of Chou so declined in power that a raid of western barbarians forced King P'ing (770-720) to move his capital from the west to the east, where he established the Eastern Chou dynasty. On this occasion many objects of cultural importance must have been lost, with the result that Chou culture from that time on became centred in the state of Lu.
> Fung 1952: 55

If Confucius thus inherited the heart of Zhou culture, it would seem that he also, indirectly, inherited the memory of Shang culture, since Lu was one of the areas to which the Shang were transported after the original Zhou victory. Indeed, Hu Shi as argued that Confucius and the group to which he belonged (called ru, "weaklings": the term became the name of the Confucian school) actively preserved the memory of the Shang, and constituted thus a messianic

movement whose expectations of deliverance were part of a Shang identity. Acknowledging that Fung Yu-lan rejects Hu's ideas, Bauer notes how Hu starts from an analysis of the term ru - a term itself much older than Confucius - and finds in it not only the meaning 'weak', but also the connotation 'to wait':

> He tried to prove that the Ju "Confucians" still wore the garments of the Shang, that they observed their ritual, particularly the ceremony of mourning, and that they played the leading role in the State of Sung and the regions east of it, the states of Ch'i and Lu (the state where Confucius was born), the domain of the Shang. According to Hu Shih, they did not simply resign themselves to the decline of the Shang but hoped for a restoration of their rule and thus of their own position of dominance.
>
> Bauer 1976:15

With an opposite reading, Creel combines the Shang and Zhou elements in the history of Lu by viewing Lu as a model of Zhou enculturation:

> In Lu, as perhaps nowhere else, we can see how completely the Chou succeeded in winning the allegiance of the conquered people (ie the Shang)
> Creel 1970:93

3. Confucius viewed his work as ordained by Heaven, yet in one saying he seems to despair of Heaven's support:

> The Master said, "I am thinking of giving up speech." Zigong said, "If you do not speak, what would there be for us, your disciples, to transmit?" The Master said, "What does Heaven ever say? Yet there are the four seasons going round, and there are the hundred things coming into being. What does Heaven ever say?" An 17.19.

We will see below that Tian does not figure significantly in the Analects, and that where it does it counts generally as an impersonal principle of cosmic order.

4. On the question of time and the slow appropriation of virtue and order in general cf for instance An 13.10, 8.12, 9.11, 11.26, 7.17. On government note the following:

> The Master said, "Even with a true king it is bound to take a generation for ren to become a reality." An 13.12
>
> The Master said, "How true is the saying that after a state has been ruled for a hundred years by good men it is possible to get the better of cruelty and do away with killing. An 13.11

Though for a contrary reading, which suggests a more shamanic interpretation of the process of political change, cf An 6.24.

5. Originally, for the Shang period, the functions of Shaman and scribe or historiographer were interlinked - Chang Kwang-chih remarks that

> the combination of the historiographic and the Shamanistic roles in individuals would be in accord

> with the view of many historians that the earliest historiographers were also religious - possibly shamanistic figures. Chang 1983:91

For the Shang the chief shaman was the king. For the Zhou I take the functions of shaman and scribe to be distinct, though as a scribe and an expert on ritual affairs I take Confucius to be fully cognizant of the place and function of shamanic practices, just as I take his text in places to be structured by shamanic ideas (particularly in association with the effective power of rulership).

6. The strong preservation of shamanic ideas in the Chuci (Songs of the South) and their influence of Laozi and Zhuangzi will be considered in the next chapter. Many religions carry myths identifying a rupture or break in shamanic or vatic power, when the ladder of direct inspired communion with the god is withdrawn, at which point there is a substitution of scribal traditions for shamanic or prophetic traditions . Chang op.cit. 44-5 records an early myth which identifies how a generalised shamanic power, which led to an indiscriminate mingling of the spirits with the people, was reduced and focussed in kingly power as the one legitimate shamanism. The scribal curtailment of shamanic power is a later stage, which I take to be fully underway by the beginning of the Zhou dynasty.

7. The contrast between sudden, immediate access to transcendent power (which is spoken of by Voegelin as metastatic faith: we will consider this in chapter eight in remarking his reading of St. Paul), and gradual opening to transcendence and self-transcendence, is a basic polarity across different religions. We will return to it in various ways throughout our inquiry.

8. Cf for instance Bauer 1976: 5-6

9. Fingarette speaks, for instance, of

> "the magic power which Confucius saw, quite correctly, as the very essence of human virtue" Fingarette 1972:1
>
> By "magic" I mean the power of a specific person to accomplish his will directly and effortlessly through ritual, gesture and incantation. The user of magic...simply wills the end in the proper ritual setting and with the proper ritual gesture and word; without further effort on his part, the deed is accomplished. Confucius' words at times strongly suggest some magical power as central to this way. Ibid p.3.

10. Cf An 4:15

> The Master said, "Can! There is one single thread binding my way together."

Since the saying occurs in the chapter devoted particularly to ren, there is a strong prima facie case that it is ren

which is indicated here.

11. This is developed, for instance, in Tu 1968.

12. Cf how Hansen develops this theme:
> Confucius did not write the Lun-yu and develop a philosophical system. The book was compiled by disciples and shows all kinds of evidence of arising from a dispute. The fragments attributed to Confucius are notoriously contradictory in tone and content. The word Lun is used mainly in classical literature for dialogues between two sides - debates. The White Horse lun, the Iron and Salt lun, Chuang Tzu equalizes lun (debates) about things. The Lun-yu (debate sayings) are best regarded as a collection of aphorisms partisans of two different lines of interpretation "remembered" Confucius as saying. They constitute a kind of debate using argument from authority...The history of Chinese Confucianism does not start with a sublime, rounded truth - but with an emerging tension and division between two lines. Hansen 1984 a:1

13/ Chan, 1955, also argues that the meaning of ren in the Analects is changed in comparison with its previous use. However, he takes pre-Confucian ren to denote "a particular virtue, namely, kindness of a ruler to his people." p. 296. Such a reading is completely at odds with the way re. is used in the Odes. (For criticism of Chan here cf Lin Yu-shang 1974-5:174). The change Chan emphasises is from a specific virtue of kindness to the more general idea of virtue-as-such, or perfect virtue. Two points should be emphasised here. Firstly, the shift towards formulating a general concept of human excellence is already found within the Odes, as we have remarked above. And secondly, the shift between the Odes and the Analects is not from a specific to a more general concept, but rather a shift between two general concepts, between two different visions of human excellence. [Lin hypothesises that this shift occurred in the context of a generalised debate about the meaning of ren].

14. Chan, 1955: 296-7 notes that this passage has caused perplexity for the last 1800 years, and after considering various interpretations of it suggests that the issue cannot yet be resolved. This was a questionable conclusion at the time of writing, and we shall see that the issue has since then been resolved.

15. Bodde's article was originally published in 1933. Part of his argument assumes that yu is not regularly used as a conjunction between subjects, a point refuted by Chan, 1955: 297. (The substantial documentation in Malmqvist 1978 shows further how frequently yu does serve as a conjunction between subjects). However, to note that Bodde is wrong on this point does not invalidate his more general

argument, as Chan apparently thinks, for the argument does not hinge on whether or not yu is conjunctive, but on the undisputed verbal function of yu as "discourse." Bodde's reading is secured by a point of punctuation that Chan does not question. [What is difficult is that Bodde has Confucius speaking (frequently) about ming, which cannot be sustained].

16. One of the difficulties in assessing Confucius' attitude to a transcendent reality is that there is little of direct reference to such in the analects: not only do tian and ming figure infrequently, they also seem to designate transcendence as impersonal lot or destiny. [One reason for taking the saying here as a piece of late polemic is that the issue over li (profit, benefit) only came to the fore after Mozi, in whose philosophy it served as a key notion. It is Mencius in particular, as we shall see, who separates a Confucian ethic from any utilitarian concern with li, but this is not an issue for Confucius himself].

17. It is part of Hansen's argument, 1984a, that from the point of view of the li (traditionalist) school any emphasis on ren (which Hansen reads as an intuitive capacity for virtue) would by-pass the authority of li. The contrast between traditional-cumulative and direct-intuitive approaches to self-cultivation - the polarity marking the later major division between Confucian schools - is thus a polarity within the Analects itself.

18. For a survey of sifferent translations and interpretations of ren, cf Chan 1975b. Fingarette remarks

> Jen has been translated variously as Good, Humanity, Love, Benevolence, Virtue, Manhood, Manhood-at-its-Best and so on. For various commentators jen has seemed to be a virtue, the all-inclusive virtue, a spiritual conditions, a complex of attitude and feelings, a mystic entity. Fingarette 1972: 37-8

19. On the background to the concept junzi Munro remarks the shifts in meaning from the Shijing through to Confucius and comments that, while junzi came to designate a moral category for Confucius, the hierarchical connotation of superior social status was not lost:

> The Confucian aristocracy held its position by merit rather than heredity, but a hierarchy was still present. Therefore, Confucian terms for the ethically advanced also carry a connotation of social rank. Munro: 1969: 115

This is a very moderate statement in comparison with Marxist critiques (noted in part already) which would simply see Confucius as providing an ethic for a landlord class; we will return to the connotations of junzi below.

20. Mencius gives the warning, for instance, to "exercise

due care over the education provided by village schools, and discipline the people by teaching them duties proper to sons and younger brothers." Mencius 1A7; Lau 1970:59. And cf also his reference to different types of educational institution and practice:

> Xiang, xu, xue, and xiao were set up for the purpose of education. Xiang means "rearing", xiao means "teaching" and xu means "archery." In the Xia dynasty it was called xiao, in the Yin xu and in the Zhou xiang, while xue was a name common to all the Three Dynasties. They all serve to make the people understand human relationships. Men. 3A3 Lau 1970:98

Mencius specifies the elite aspect to education by adding the rider

> "When it is clear that those in authority (shang) understand human relationships (renlun: the ordered relationships amongst the ren), the ordinary people (xiamin: the people below) will be affectionate."

21. Cf for instance how Cheng Te-kun perceives the issue:

> Confucius was probably the first scholar to establish a public school. Before him knowledge was a sign of nobility and learning a monopoly of the nobel families. He took the classics from the royalhouse-hold to teach to the common people, to anyone regardless of his class and profession. In the Chan-kuo (Warring States) period, public education like this became popular, opening the way for more of the common people to receive education and enter government service. This soon gave rise to a class of professional civil servants called shih (scholars)
>
> Cheng 1963: xxx

While Confucius is the first Zhou teacher, of whom we know, to accept payment for instruction and to accept as students any who wished to learn, in the absence of detailed knowledge of educational institutions, their foundation and aims, it seems likely that the peasant who received instruction from Confucius would be a rare and occasional figure. Hsu 1968 looks at the background issue of social mobility in the time of Confucius, and insofar as Confucian instruction was in major part geared to attainment of social status through public service then the relationship between education and social mobility is an important one. Galt 1951 is of value for the later development of educational institutions.

22. The centrality of "friendship" as an issue in Western philosophical and religious literature - at least, for the period we are covering here - and its relative neglect as a matter of direct concern within Chinese philosophical discussions is a crucial point of contrast between traditions. My first comment here would be that, always within Confucianism, clan and family relationships took priority (so that any notion of friendship is subordinate to, or contained within, them) whilst from the Greeks the transition from clan order to democratic order made the

relationships between individuals (thus, beyond family considerations) a much more central issue. The topic is much more nuanced than this, though, as we shall see.

23. A statement recorded in the Zuozhan suggests furthermore that the people be kept in ignorance of the laws by which they were governed, thus maintaining all power firmly in the hands of the ruling elite. On the promulgation of the lawcode of Jiu Confucius is reckoned to have complained:

> China is going to ruin! It has lost its proper rules. China ought to keep the laws and rules which T'ang Shu received for the regulation of his people, and the ministers and great officers ought to keep them in their several positions. Then the people would be able to honour the upper classes, and the higher classes would be able to preserve their inheritances. There would be nothing wrong with the noble or the mean. We should have what might be called the proper rule...But now when those rules are abandoned, and tripods with the penal laws on them are cast instead, the people will study the tripods. How will they then honour their men of rank, and what will the nobles do? When there is no distinction of noble and mean, how can a state continue to exist? Quoted Fung ;952:314

24. Munro remarks:

> For the Confucians, the sage-king (sheng-wang) was a lofty ideal, whose status was rarely reached. The term was restricted to someone of the stature of the first Chou kings. Ranks more within the grasp of most men were the "superior men" (chun-tzu) and the "knight" or "gentleman" (shih). Munro 1969:115

25. We noted in chapter two that the Yuejing (Classic of Music) was an early classic that was subsequently lost, its traces surviving perhaps in a chapter in the Liji. One reading of early Confucianism (indeed, of Zhou culture prior to Confucius) might be in terms of a tension between yue and li, where yue carried connotations of pleasure (the character can also be translated as pleasure) and spontaneity, with li standing for order and decorum. In Xunzi the balance is finally in favour of li over yue, on which Bauer remarks:

> (Hsun-tzu) considered music as that element of culture that united men beyond all their differences, whilst its no less important opposite pole, "ritual" (li), supposedly had the function of separating them according to their different classes. But some especially important, perhaps indeed the most important, provisions of "ritual" referred to the instructions concerning the various forms of mourning for the dead. Particularly with respect to the kinds of garment and the length of time they were to be worn, these rules made such subtle distinctions that

> the severely hierarchical social structure found an exceptionally clear expression here. It would therefore appear that from the very beginning, "ritual" evoked associations of "misfortune," "mourning" and class-conscious dress in Chinese thought, and also the "distinction" created by social categories. Conversely "music" evoked such concepts as "happiness", "joy", "nakedness", and the union of men irrespective of class and sex. Hsun-tzu wished to assure "ritual" the most important place in the Confucian system. Although his strict views did not find unanimous acceptance, it seems almost an omen that of the "Five Classics" most deeply respected in Confucianism, one, originally the sixth according to tradition, should have been lost. It was the "classic of music." Conversely, the "classic of ritual" became so voluminous that it had to be reedited in three separate works. Bauer 1976:11

Confucius expresses his appreciation of music at various points - cf for instance An 3.23, 3.25, 7.14, 8.8, 8.15 - but a full appreciation of what is at stake would require consideration of the kind of music that he favoured.

26. Obviously, there is a choice involved as to whether to be virtuous or not: Confucius is constantly prompting a choice for li and ren, and rejecting the choice of Zai Yu who stayed in bed during the day, An. 5.10, but he seems to presume that there can be no conflict between different li: the junzi knows that any apparent conflict, once examined, will reveal the appropriate hierarchical ordering of the li in question, thus rendering action transparent and spontaneous. On the basic metaphor at work here - of a way, dao, without a crossroads - cf Fingarette 1972: 18-36.

27. The conflict is between Confucius' own authority as scribe and teacher (with his claim to correct understanding of the traditions of the Zhou) and the authority of those invested with power in society, who might perceive Zhou traditions differently. We will consider below whether there is an implicit conflict between Confucius' claims to authority and the claims of kingship.

28. Though this observation requires qualification in the light of Fung Yu-lan's comment:

> Confucius...spent many years in the company of his disciples, travelling unceasingly from one feudal state to another and talking with their rulers Fung 1952:50

29. An exception to this would seem to be indicated at An 1.6 where Confucius says that "a young man...should love the multitude at large (ai zhong)."

30. While the reading of ren as love or affection became central later, it must be stressed that only a forced interpretation can derive this as a major part of its

meaning in the Analects. Thus, Chan overstates the case when he remarks

> when a pupil asked him about jen, (Confucius) replied, "It is to love man" (XII.22). We have here the key word to Confucian doctrine, namely "ai" love. It is on the basis of this meaning, no doubt, that the standard Chinese dictionary, the Shuo-wen (AD 100), defines jen as "affection" (ch'in. It is also on this basis that ancient Chinese philosophers, whether Confucian, Taoist, Moist, or Legalist, and practically all Han Confucianists have equated jen with love. Chan. 1955:299

That the doctrine of Confucius came to be developed in this direction is, I would say, more to do with the force of his rival Mozi's teaching on universal love, and Mencius' reformulation of Confucian teaching in response to it, than with any specifically strong or central resources in the Analects itself.

Tu 1981 reads ren as love, stressing its tender aspect, drawing in part on Boodberg 1953, and in part on an analysis by Fang Ying-hsien (which I have not been able to consult) where the pre-Confucian reading of ren is taken as tenderness and altruism (p 47). We have already seen that such a reading cannot hold for ren in the Shijing, and it is curious that Tu makes no reference to Lin Yu-sheng's study. Boodberg's article raises some more interesting issues.

31. Some quality of yielding or deference does seem to be implicated in ren, and I take this to be in major part a consequence of its link with li, where deference and knowing ones position are crucial to the code of li. (Confucius identifies this, for instance, in speaking of the deferential behaviour appropriate to archery). Boodberg claims, on etymological grounds, and on the basis of comparing renwith other terms with initial "r-", that ren

> possessed the same connotations as our word "gentle," "gentleness" and "gentility", all derived from the Latin gens. The notion of gentleness as softness in a primary sense, rather than as a quality characteristic of the gentleman, is however, more deep-seated and is probably inherent in jen, as evidenced by a host of its etymological relatives." Boodberg 1953:328.

(Boodberg cites ru ("weakling", Confucian) as one such relative). My one reservation on this etymology is that it does not work for ren in the Shijing, with its more material connotation, though this use could be seen as deviant from the original sense of the "r-" family.

32. In other respects also the comparison is quite inappropriate. Fung Yu-lan, for instance, draws a specific comparison between Confucius and the Sophists, insofar as both accepted payment for teaching, and both sought to educate people for a life of government and public office;

cf Fung 1952:52-3.

33. A valuable reading of the history of li, which closely specifices different phases is that history, can be found in Fehl, 1971.

34. I consider this below.

35. Cf. Fingarette 1972:9

36. Analects 10 provides a survey of li as these are exemplified in the life of Confucius.

37. The process of differentiation, as we have already indicated, is crucial to Voegelin's philosophy of history and is elaborated particularly in Voegelin 1956 and 1974

38. I think this is a difficult point to evaluate. We have remarked already how the essence of Zhou ritual traditions was preserved in Lu, and that Confucius identified with these. I will consider below the possible focus of relativism in the Analects, and try to assess its implications.

39. Thus one saying has it that

> The Master said, "The junzi is no vessel" An. 2.12

while another remarks

> Zigong asked, "What do you think of me?"
> The Master said, "You are a vessel."
> "What kind of vessel?"
> "A sacrificial vessel." An. 5.4

Lau 1979:64 notes that the denial in An 2.12 is a denial that the junzi is a specialist: ritual vessels each had specific functions, whereas the jumzi is identified with no function other than the attainment of virtue. Yet this is only part of the issue, for there was a function that Confucius prepared his followers for, and pursued himself, and that was government service and political leadership. Here it is important to note that, for Confucius and throughout most of Chinese history, the state or government was conceived (in essence and ideal) in a semi-sacred way, constituting itself a religious order (and this is one reason why for Confucius a religious order or church separable from the State was fairly much ruled out, though Zhu Xi's neo-Confucian reforms, and the status of neo-Confucian academies, do move in that direction, ie towards institutions devoted to learning for self-cultivation rather than learning for public service). Commenting on the significance of government service in Chinese tradition, Creel remarks:

> the Chinese have not only written and thought about government; most of them have considered active participation in it to be the noblest and most desirable of occupations. Since as early as Shang times...civilian administrators have been the great heroes...In China, the concentration and fervor that

> the Romans devoted to war were channeled into government.
>
> Creel 1970:251.

40. Commenting on the section from An. 12.11 (which Lau translates "Let the ruler be a ruler, the subject a subject, the father a father, the son a son") Fingarette remarks that what is at stake is not a status or role but an activity: "to be a father is an activity" Fingarette, 1981:338. This secures an important feature in Confucius' philosophy, viz. that if one ceases to act as a prince then one ceases to <u>be</u> a prince: mere status and power are irrelevant. Whether one might cease to be a father, however, is a more problematic issue, as we shall see.

41. Cf for instance An. 9.5:

> When under siege in Kuang, the Master said, "With King Wen dead, is not culture (<u>wen</u>) invested here in me? If Heaven intends culture to be destroyed, those who come after me will not be able to have any part of it. If Heaven does not intend culture to be destroyed, then what can the men of Kuang do to me.

Confucius also identified to a considerable extent with the Duke of Zhou - cf for instance An. 7.5.

42. For consideration of the inherited themes of writing and cunning cf for instance Derrida's essay "Plato's Pharmacy" Derrida 1981
We have already noted (n. 24) Confucius' sense of the subversive power of writing - that if the law codes should be written down then the people would be able to subvert the traditional political order.

43. One prime example of obedience is fidelity to the ways of the parents after their death.

44. Cf An 13:18 and Confucius' comment that "Fathers cover up for their sons, and sons cover up for their fathers. Straightness is to be found in such behaviour." The questions of relativism comes up particularly in this example to the extent that, when presented with the situation in another state (where a son gave evidence against his father for theft, rather than cover up for him), Confucius simply says "It is not like that in our state." The issue here is whether Confucius simply accepts that different states have different customs, or whether implicitly he is holding up the practices of his own state as normative.

45. Creel 1951: 20-22 makes some mention of the horrors that were part of life at the time of Confucius, and detailed documentation can be found throughout the <u>Zuozhuan</u>.

46. For consideration of some of the issues here cf for

instance Blumenberg 1985 and Girard 1972.

47. The critique of Aristotle (as exemplar of a rationalism first presented by Socrates) is a major motif in The Birth of Tragedy, where the step back to Aeschylus and Sophocles is a step towards a full integration of Apollonian and Dionysiac moments within tragedy. Here Aristotelian catharsis marks a rationalised handling of profound emotion within the world of theatre as spectacle, where the separation of the audience from the scene of representation parallels and implicates the separation of rationality from the play of force and energy within the unconscious life of the individual.

48. Both issues are covered by Heidegger: being-towards-death and the theme of terror and dread in Being and Time, and the more playful approach to death that is evident in his later writings - though there remains an element of nostalgia (completely alien to Zhuangz..) where the element of play still sits within the shadow of death as terror. [On the ways in which for the West the death of God marks the space within which death becomes god, or a new absolute, cf M.C. Taylor 1986).

49. For some valuable reflections here cf Fingarette 1979a, and Hall and Ames 1987:253ff.

50. Confucius repudiated the title sage (sheng) for himself, but it was given to him by some of his followers - cf for instance An 19.25.

51. The issues involved here are often denied, rather than encountered. Thus Hsu Cho-yun remarks:

> while archaeological excavations from Shang dynasty sites still reveal the practice of human sacrifice, there are no examples of human sacrifice from Chou sites.
> from "The Unfolding of Early Confucianism", Eber 1986:25

There are in fact many Zhou sites that evidence human sacrifice, as is shown for instance in Li Xueqin 1985.

52. For a valuable reading of violence and the foundations of religion and culture cf Girard 1972.

53. Mencius, for instance, indicates that the junzi does not wish to know of the killing that goes on in order to bring food to the table; he wishes simply to enjoy the food: Men. 1A7; Lau 1970:55.

54. Cf. for instance An. 6.18

55. Cf for instance An. 17:25

> The Master said, "In one's household, it is the women and the small men that are difficult to deal with. If you let them get too close, they become insolent.

If you keep them at a distance, they complain.
Cf also how at An. 16.14 the identity of the woman is circumscribed as an aspect of male identity - a point we shall return to with Dong Zhongshu.

56. Though Confucius was soon viewed as a focus of royal virtue; Creel remarks:

> As early as the Mo Tzu we find a Confucian asserting that if a sage had been on the throne in his lifetime, Confucius would have been made Emperor (Mo Tzu 12.11b), and Mencius felt called upon to explain why it was that Confucius had not occupied the throne (Mencius 5(i)6.3).
> Creel 1951: 296

57. Cf Mozi 39; Watson 1964: 125-6.

CHAPTER 4 NOTES

1/ Cf for instance Hansen 1984a: 2

> I doubt that in the Western sense of the term, we could call Confucius a philosopher at all - let alone the greatest philosopher of China. Confucius was essentially pre-philosophical in the sense that his sayings show little evidence that he was engaged in a critical dialogue with other thinkers or in constructing critical theory.

2/ For aspects of the social background prior to and during the time of Mozi cf for instance Blakely 1977 and 1979, Hsu Cho-yun 1968, and Hsiao 1979: 214-224

3/ For further details here cf the section "Moderation in Funerals", Mozi 25, Watson 1964: 65-77.

4/ Cf for instance the description of an original Hobbesian state of nature, leading to a desire for hierarchy and an identification with the wishes of superiors as a path to social order, in Mozi II, Watson 1964: 34ff.

5/ This is one of the few passages that I know of in Chinese philosophy that approximates to Western ideas of a divine creator laying down laws of nature.

6/ Thus Hansen:

> (Mozi) assumes, with Confucius, that our affections are naturally 'filial', but argues...that humans can best accomplish their filial goals by practicing universal love. Hansen 1984b: 7

7/ For more on the shi cf Hsu Cho-yun 1968; Munro 1969:9-10; Fung 1952:52.

8/ On the acceptance of hierarchy and authority behind Mozi's position here Hansen comments:

> Mo Tzu's argument...draws on the Confucian assumptions of the power of models and the naturalness of following traditions - whatever they are. Practicing universality will change society because people respond to models. 1984b: 7

Bauer comments:

> Through the system of adaptation (or assimilation) to what is above, the thinking of the entire people is to be developed in many individual cells and by degrees. It is to be focussed on the leader and to become strong and unified in him. The knowledge and the will of the ruler are thus greatly strengthened, and it is in the thinking of them that the people

will find its fulfilment.
Bauer 1976: 29-30

9/ On the notion that Mozi envisaged a rigidly hierarchical and authoritarian state cf for instance Rubin 1976: 39ff.

10/ On the function of belief in spirits as an aspect of the maintenance of social order cf Mozi 31, Watson 1964:94ff. What Mozi offers here is a set of pragmatic religious sanctions for social order; Fung Yu-lan remarks that his arguments for a theological position are thin

> but we must remember that Mo Tzu had no interest in metaphysics as such, his purpose being merely to establish religious sanctions with which to induce men to love one another." Fung 1952: 97

11/ On ren and jian'ai in Mozi cf for instance Hsiao, 1979: 229ff.

12/ Mozi was a military specialist and his community of followers can be read as a distinctly martial group, which carries definite implications for the tenor one might wish to ascribe to jian'ai. Rubin for instance, emphasising the hierarchical conformism of Mozi's social vision, remarks

> Although an opponent of aggressive wars, Mo Tzu chooses the latter of the opposed principles of wen and wu, not only because he is a firm and irreconcilable opponent of culture, but also because in his scheme all of society is militarized. Rubin 1976:43

13/ Though Mozi's culture-heroes are different from those of Confucius: Mozi goes back to earlier figures than those praised in the analects, in order to establish a more ancient, and thus more privileged, foundation for order and virtue - cf Bauer:

> It is interesting to observe how the rivals of the Confucians imitated them in presenting the past as a model. They simply situated their own golden ages in periods still more remote, thereby opening up the past to an ever greater depth. Bauer 1976: 30.

14/ I take it as an important point that Mozi nowhere praises the virtues of war: to this extent I think Rubin over-emphasises the martial tenor and implications of his philosophy.

15/ For consideration of how Mozi has fared within the cultural reassessments of post-revolutionary China, cf Louie 1986.

16/ For a development of this argument cf Fried "Tribe to State or State to Tribe in ancient China" and Keightley "The Late Shang State, When, Where and What" in Keightley 1983:467-493 and 523-564.

17/ For a fruitful consideration of this issue cf Chang Chung-yuan 1975: 19ff.

18/ There is, furthermore, no indication from the Daodejing that Laozi reckoned women capable of becoming sages - though the text is so brief that there is much about which it carries no indication. There is a strong tradition of female shamans in the Chuci, however, and it is possible that this is presupposed by Laozi.

19/ I am indebted here to the arguments put forward in Hansen 1984c (on Laozi), together with Hansen's earlier article "A Tao of Tao in Chuang-tzu," in Mair 1983: 24-55.

20/ I am thus reading Laozi here as similar in many respects to that later tradition which is in fact the one legitimate philosophical continuation of early Daoism, viz. the iconoclastic tradition of Chan (Zen) Buddhism. I do not dispute that there are strong substantive aspects to Laozi's text, just as there are within Chan practice, but there is also a strong philosophy of language which establishes the emptiness of any philosophical position - including Laozi's!

21/ Again, if we note Chan/Zen as a continuation of Laozi's thinking, then it is the absolute stillness of a Zen garden that epitomizes Laozi's vision of nature, perhaps even more than the vast landscapes of traditional Chinese painting where man is such an insignificant figure: those landscapes represent nature as a living, growing form, nearer to Mencius' tree-covered mountain than to Laozi's uncarved block.

22/ The extent to which the all-devouring mother is a male fiction - an index of male fear of the female - would need to be considered in any reading of the underlying structure of ideas here. Neumann looks at "the mother" from the perspective of an archetypal symbolism, but his work would need to be balanced by consideration of, for instance, Kofman 1985.

23/ This has to be set against aspects of his philosophy where li is important. However, where for Confucius we find ren and li to be two main poles or strands of his thinking, we find with Mencius a single conjoint moral notion renyi (benevolence and righteousness) as a foundation for morality, with li taking a relatively insignificant place in comparison.

24/ Commenting on the idea of benevolent government, renzhong, that is so central to Mencius' extended reading of the significance of ren, Hsiao Kung-Chuan remarks

> The benevolent government must have its concrete forms through which to be practiced. Mencius'

statements on this would all seem to be more or less summed up under the headings: to teach and to nourish. Moreover, his theory of nurturing the people is especially penetrating; there is nothing comparable to it in all the pre-Ch'in philosophies...Throughout the Seven Books of the Mencius, Mencius focusses his concern on enriching the people's livelihood, decreasing taxes and imports, bringing wars to an end, and correcting boundaries
Hsiao 1979:150

25/ Gaozi said, "Human nature is like whirling water. Give it an outlet in the east and it will flow east; give it an outlet in the west and it will flow west. Human nature does not show any preference for either good or bad just as water does not show any preference for either east or west."
"It certainly is the case," said Mencius, "that water does not show any preference for either east or west, but does it show the same indifference to high and low? Human nature is good just as water seeks low ground. There is no man who is not good; there is no water that does not flow downwards. Men. 6A2; Lau 1983:160

26/ The artisanal and geometric imagery here could have been lifted direct from Mozi.

27/ Thus, Mencius speaks of 3 sages - Bo Yi, Yi Yin and Confucius - and remarks
All three were sages of old. I have not been able to emulate any of them, but it is my hope and wish to follow the example of Confucius."
"Were Po Yi and Yi Yin as much an equal of Confucius as that?"
"No. Ever since man came into this world, there has never been another Confucius."
Men, 2A2; Lau 1983:79.
And cf also, on Confucius as sage-king, 3B9.

28/ Cf for instance 1A2, 1B1, 4A1.

29/ In relation to this cf 7A5, 4A1.

30/ Cf the question asked of Mencius:
"Is it not excessive to travel with a retinue of hundreds of followers in scores of chariots and to live off one feudal lord after another?"
Men 3B4; Lau 1983:109
On the alienation this could imply, Hsiao remarks:
Not only Yen Hui and Yuan Hsien (two of Confucius' best disciples, noted both for their retiring behaviour and for their poverty) would not have been able (to approach close enough) so much as to glimpse him; even Confucius with his single cart drawn by two

horses presented an appearance that is by no means in a class with Mencius.
Hsiao 1979:145

31/ Hansen comments on some of the presuppositions behind the cultivation of qi, pointing to aspects of this cultivation in Daoist practice prior to Mencuis:
"Early Chinese "medical" theory treated life and death as explained by the presence or absence of Ch'i" ethers (also "breath"). When you breath you are alive, when you run out you are dead!
Yang Chu thought the length of life was pre-determined by Heaven and the determining mechanism was ch'i. The more you have the longer you live. The determination, therefore, was not by purposive heavenly intervention but was natural. The amount of ch'i determined only the time of your natural death. If your ch'i was released by violent physical trauma, you would die before your mandated time - thus disobeying Heaven. Hansen 1984d: 2.
Mencius' cultivation of qi thus fits first into the context (already noted in the Shijing) of the ordained requirement to preserve one's life, and then into the context of meditational practices developed by those who chose to withdraw from society in order to preserve their qi. This aspect of Mencius' philosophy marks one point of his close proximity to Daoism.

32/ We have seen in the Shijing the sense in which the people (min) are generated by heaven and in turn generate the ren : the people thus have an original proximity to Heaven. Mencuis acknowledges that the people of other states will come flocking to a state that is well ruled, thus showing by their action how Heaven is with the well-ruled state.

33/ Cf for instance 1B8, and also 4A2:
If a ruler ill-uses his people to an extreme degree, he will be murdered and his state annexed; if he does it to a lesser degree, his person will be in danger and his territory reduced. Such rules will be given the posthumous names of Yu (ie "benighted") and Li ("tyrannical"), and even dutiful sons and grandsons will not be able to have them revoked in a hundred generations. Lau 1983: 118-9.
Mencius also points out that, in compsoing the Spring and Autumn Annals in a time of regicide and parricide Confucius' was, strictly speaking, taking over the rulers' prerogative, but only because the times necessitated it. -cf 3B9.

34/ Part of the background that is crucial for Zhuangzi is the development of forms of logical argumentation in the -3rd century. Graham comments:
The new art of disputation affected in different ways all the schools of the 3rd century. Chuang-tzu was a

> friend of Hui Shih, debated with him and made fun of his logic. Living at a time when reason first became self-aware in China, he is the first conscious anti-rationalist. Disputation is the technique for judging between alternatives; but according to Chuang-tzu it is precisely when we distinguish alternatives, the right and the wrong, the beneficial and the harmful, self and other, that we cut ourselves off from the world we objectify, and lose the capacity of the angler, the carpenter and the swimmer to heed his total situation with undivided attention and respond with the immediacy of a shadow to a shape and an echo to a sound. Graham 1978:21

35/ Cf for instance Hansen's remarks here:

> Chuang Tzu's opening contradicts the fundamental assumption of primitive, contradictory Taoism. Language is not unnatural, nor all wrong, nor inimical to the cosmos. On the contrary, all language is natural, all doctrines are equally the pipes of Heaven. heaven blows out of all the pipes, not just one - neither preferring the Confucians', nor the Mohists!...Since all doctrines are pipes of heaven, yours has no special status in being caused by heaven. Instead of saying all doctrines are wrong, Chuang Tzu grants (in a sense) all are right - that is, all are in accord with heaven-nature. Hansen 1984e: 5-6.

36/ Throughout Zhuangzi the shenren can be viewed as a powerful shaman set within a philosophical text.

37/ Cf Zhuangzi 2, Graham 1986:49.

38/ For the best extended treatment of Zhuangzi as a naturalistic philosopher cf Wu 1982.

39/ For some reflections here cf Wu 1982: 117-121

40/ I think Zhuangzi does himself favour a kind of naturalistic simplicity and reclusiveness as a (most) worthwhile life, but recognises that any attempt to argue for it as the sole way is as open to contradiction as any argument privileging Mohism or Confucianism.

41/ For the strongest critique of ren and yi cf Zhuangzi 8, Graham 1986: 200-203; for the way in which Zhuangzi usurps the voice of Confucius, and makes Confucius himself reject ren and yi as impediments cf Zhuangzi 6, Graham 1986: 92.

42/ For extended consideration here cf Chasseguet-Smirgel 1985b.

43/ For careful re-readings of Xunzi's pragmatism cf Hansen 1984f and Cua 1985.

44/ For Xunzi on xing as evil cf Xunzi 23, Watson 1964: 157.

CHAPTER 5 NOTES

1/ For further on the daotong cf Ching 1974b.

2/ The process of transmission was referred to as "The Transmission of the Lamp", and selections from the texts considered central to it can be found in Chang Chung-yuan 1969. Comment on some of the presuppositions at work in this idea of transmission - particularly insofar as it ascribes authority to the Chan master and his teachings as a form of living scripture - Yanagida remarks:

> The attitude which led to this reverence for the oral record of one's predecessors is one which favors individual facts or incidents over abstract generalities. The earliest genre of Ch'an literature - a group of works known as the "transmission of the lamp" histories (ch'uan-teng shih or, more simply teng-shih) - generally consist of the biographies of the earlier Patriarchs and successive Masters. This is fully in accordance with the predisposition toward personalized, "incidental expressions of truth, the concrete rather than the abstract."
> From "The Recorded Sayings" Text of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism", in Lai and Lancaster 1983:189.

We have mentioned already the centrality of the "conversational tradition" in Chinese philosophy; I will return to this briefly in chapter 7 by way of comparison with the formalised Platonic dialogue, where the idea of "conversation" is handled in a completely different way.

3/ On the general structure and outlines of Dong's philosophy cf Fung 1953: 7-87.

4/ Some of the background religious ideas that are implicated in Dong's philosophy are very well considered in Loewe 1979 and 1982. Pirazzoli - t'Sterstevens 1982: 41-60 also usefully covers the same topic.

5/ Commenting on the general background presuppositions at work here, Bauer remarks:

> In the doctrine of the transmission of the heavenly mandate, there had already existed certain phenomena which were interpreted as the signs of a beginning, a flourishing or a declining dynasty. But they had been confined to certain good or evil acts of the ruler. People believed that they knew that such acts would either result in the approval of heaven and thus the transfer or the retention of the mandate, or provoke its displeasure and therefore its withdrawal. But during the Han period a special "language" of the silent heaven was beginning to be discovered. It no longer tended to express itself in the language of the people and its right to revolution, as had been

> the case with Mencius, but in the language of nature. History books were suddenly filled with reports about miraculous celestial or terrestrial phenomena which were assigned a particular significance and usually meant that the ruler was being either encouraged or admonished. Of course, reports of this sort concerning comets, earthquakes, mountain slides, hail storms and similar events had been provided in earlier chronicles. Similarly, the vague feeling that some of them at least had a more profound significance can be shown to have existed at an early time. What was new was their systematization, and especially the opinion that they were not mere reactions of heaven to the way the ruler governed, but were frequently devoid of moral overtones. This was the case when they announced by certain signs the dawn of a new dynasty destined to rule under a different element. The ruler (and therefore mankind as a whole) was no longer wholly the master of his own fate. Even when his conduct was exemplary, his time could have run out and an era might end. Historical development no longer followed the laws of men as much as it did those of nature." Bauer 1976: 72-3.

Part of the background thinking here, that was assimilated into a full system during the Han, was already under way in the Zhou period in the cosmological speculations centred around the Yin-yang and wuxing (5 elements) schools. For considerations cf Fung 1952: 159-169, and 379-399.

6/ There are various difficulties in this formulation - which remain as difficulties in the theorisation of transcendence within Dong's philosophy - but I do not intend to pursue them here. The difficulties (around what is in the West partly a contrast between imminance and transcendence) remain operative within Zhu Xi's philosophy, and I will consider them further there.

7/ This vision of man is severely criticised by Wang Chong, as we shall see below.

8/ Voegelin 1956 considers various aspects of the microcosm - macrocosm parallels in different cultures. For some fascinating reflections on the process whereby the imperial order of the Han came to be established, and thus for an indirect treatment of some of the tensions present in Deng's attempt to link Heaven and Earth, Heaven and Man, cf Voegelin 1974: 272-299. With various modifications at the level of metaphysical articulation, the concept of the body itself as a mirror and image of transcendence - continuous with the ideas, already encountered, of the body as sacred, and of the need to preserve one's qi - remains a central image for Zhu Xi, and is indeed one of the hallmarks of Chinese philosophical and religious anthropology, for virtually every school and tradition (there are some excesses of asceticism and

religiously-inspired suicide, in pursuit of nirvana, within Chinese Buddhism, but these are exceptional). As we have acknowledged, though, the sacredness of the body needs to be read against the harrowing of the body in the mourning rituals. And it also needs to be read in relation to the extensive repertoire of torture and physical mutilation as a form of punishment, that remained standard in the Zhou, Han, and indeed later dynasties.

9/ Commenting on the way in which, through extensive modification of the Mencian position, Xunzi's ritualism came to be accepted as an outworking of (human) nature, Bauer notes:

> In addition to many texts which clearly derived from the school of Hsun-tzu, although his name was not mentioned, other texts were introduced which were intended to demonstrate that the Confucian attitude had grown like a thing in nature, as had been maintained by the school of Mencuis. As mentioned previously, the bridge here was the notion of family love as rooted in nature. By an almost unnoticeable shift in the argument, the presumably much less "natural" love of children for their parents "piety" (hsiao), was given priority over the (most nearly "natural") love of parents for their offspring (for which a special term was not even created).
>
> Bauer 1976: 69-70.

10/ It is uncommon for writers engaged in comparative work to contrast the complementary dualism of Yin and yang with the conflict dualism of Ahura Mazda and Ahriman, and to stress that Chinese cosmology works within a basically harmonious and balanced, rather than conflictual, universe. There is truth in this as regards Daoist readings of yin-yang, but for Confucians yin is usually a subordinate principle, liable to enter into conflict with yang. For Dong Zhongshu and the Bohutong yin is a primary focus for the presence of evil in cosmic and human affairs (for Zhu Xi this function is taken over by qi).

11/ We have already touched on the issue of friendship in relation to Confucius. The determining background factors for the different philosophical and theoretical approaches to friendship in China and the West are difficult to determine. We will encounter, in relation to Homer and Aristotle, the presupposition of a conflictual and competitive basis to social order, meaking a contractual form of friendship a necessary feature of survival. Shijing poets and Confucians focussed on a vision of social harmony but in the conflicts of the Warring States period we might well expect, in the absence of harmony, friendship to be prized and theorised within a programme of social survival. This did not happen; and while Confucians stressed clan-order (where family links, rather than friendships with those outwith the clan/family, were to the

fore) the Legalist who destroyed the clans emphasised the power of the state rather than friendships between individuals and groups. For the Confucians it is again the power of the clan that becomes central.
Conflict apart, three other factors bearing on friendship might be mentioned. 1/ Greek democracy, with its stress on the individual, emphasised relationships between individuals, friendship included. 2/ Christianity, with its stress on the unique significance of persons, symbolised friendship as an aspect of spiritual experience. 3/ Christianity, with its emphasis on God as person, emphasised the possibility of friendship between man and God. These three points marks significant contrasts with Chinese traditions.

12/ Serres' reading of the parasite stands as one of the most powerful readings of post-humanist philosophy.

13/ This despite the fact that the possibility, the very meaning, of integrity, is rendered null from the start.

14/ To follow this further, we could fruitfully ready Wang Chong in the light of Nietzsche's will to power.

15/ This notion could be read in line with medieval Christian notions of evil as privatio boni.

16/ Th literature here is vast; for a very useful philosophical appraoch to Zen concepts of the person cf Kasulis 1981.

17/ For a still-valuable consideration of issues here cf Suzuki.

CHAPTER 6 NOTES

1/ On issues between Confucianism and Buddhism, and Zhu Xi and Buddhism, cf for instance Fu 1973 and Fu "Chu Hsi on Buddhism", Chan 1986b: 377-407. On neo-Confucian and Daoist interactions cf Berling 1979; of interest also is Cahill 1980. The crypto-Buddhism of the idealist (Lu-Wang) strand of neo-Confucianism, and Zhu's disagreement with it, is particularly well focussed in the Goose Lake Monastery meeting between Zhu Xi and Lu Xiangshan - on this cf Ching 1974a. For comprehensive discussions of Zhu Xi's work and context cf Chan 1986b.

2/ There is considerable discussion as to how to interpret taiji, li, qi, and also tian, within Zhu Xi's philosophy. One commentator remarks:

> T'ai-chi and li have been understood to stand on the same level because T'ai-chi can be thought of as the Great Ultimate from which everything is generated and in which everything exists. But a higher place, a place superior to li, can be given to T'ai-chi because it is "the ultimate of li" or "the totality of li." This is a fairly prevalent way of understanding Chu Hsi's philosophical system. Yu Yamanoi "The Great Ultimate and Heaven in Chu Hsi's Philosophy," Chan 1986b: 79.

The reading of taiji in relation to li is particularly important insofar as Zhu took Cheng Yi's statement that "principle (li) is one but its manifestations are many" to constitute the basis of his metaphysics. Huang indicates how important the arguments on li and taiji were in providing a platform against Buddhism.

> A new philosophical approach of searching after arguments for the reality of an ultimate was a departure from the past. In the thinking of Neo-Confucianists, it would seem, their success or failure in reviving the Confucian philosophy largely depended on how convincing their arguments for a sounder theory were, so as to challenge effectively the prevailing Buddhist doctrine of the phenomenal world, including man, as unreal and illusory - a doctrine which the Neo-Confucianists believed to be ontologically and ethically-religiously unsound. Interestingly, the term t'ai-chi, merely mentioned in the I Ching, was now to receive due attention from the Sung philosophers as the ultimate source of the universe. Huang 1974: 278

Taiji was not, however, simply a rational principle designating an ordered cosmos; it was also a world principle of absolute perfection, governing both the cosmos as a whole and the inner structure of an individual life. As it specified a totality of rational order, so it specified a totality of moral achievement that was

incumbent on the individual; commenting on the tension that this tension provoked for moral life (a point to which we shall return) Metzger remarks:

> The pathos of this totalism also made meaningful the Neo-Confucian term for ultimate being, t'ai-chi (the supreme, ultimate point which can be reached). Chu Hsi's view that this "supreme ultimate" is part of every individual existent connoted the totalistic quality of ultimacy ascribed to all moral life. Even the very idea of ts'un (preserving) the presence of heaven in one's daily life connoted the totalistic watchfulness needed to cling to something on the verge of being lost. The anxious fear of "losing" this presence is obvious in Chu Hsi. Metzger 1977: 62

3/ While this much is true and important, there is nonetheless an issue over mastery in the cosmos that does exist as a topic in Zhu's philosophy. We noted in chapter one how Zhu could not read tian as a quasi-personal cosmic lord. This notion is tied also to the idea that intelligence and awareness are cosmic, not simply human, properties, which carried the further assumption that the human mind in conformity with the mind of Heaven might ultimately control the cosmic process. Metzger comments:

> The Neo-Confucian's emphasis on cognition was invariably combined with the insight that since the capacity to have awareness and think intelligently was itself not the product of human intelligence, it existed as a cosmic given. This chih-chueh (purely natureal consciousness) had, they further assumed, a kind of spiritual or even magical quality, for which they used ancient terms like ling (spiritually free), ming (bright), shen (buoyantly empathetic spirit), and hsu (empty of all particular concepts or feelings). Thus Chu Hsi said, "The spiritually free aspect of existnece is just the mind." Neo-Confucians also answered that this "purely natural consciousness" was indivisible throughout the cosmos. This idea was a correlate of their belief in the organic oneness of the cosmos and in the mind's transnatural power to control the cosmos. Metzger 1977: 67; and cf pp 77-79.

We will consider below how there are two senses to tian in Zhu: in one, tian is subordinate to taiji, but in the other (the moral aspect of tian) tian controls taiji. Commenting on this, Yu remarks:

> It seems that the t'ien as spoken of by Chu Hsi has a double meaning, one as a natural object in the universe and one as the creator or organiser of the universe. While t'ien, so far as it can be defined as one of all creation in the universe, can remain in the frame of the li-chi philosophy, T'ien as the creator or organizer of the universe exists beyond the realm of li-ch'i, jutting out of the frame of the li-ch'i philosophy. Art. cit. Chan 1986b:88

4/ Zhu thus sees the universe, constituted by yin and yang and wuxing, as a constant cycle of change and transformation. He remarks:

> When (taiji) is not moving, it is at rest; when it is not at rest, it is moving again. Yichuan (Cheng Yi) said "There is no start for activity and stillness, and there is no beginning for yin and yang. Only the one who understands the Dao can understand this." When activity arrives at its limit, then there is stillness; when stillness is at its limit, then activity is underway once more...in fact, prior to activity there is stillness; and prior to stillness activity is underway. This is as when the day is passed, then night ensues. When night has passed, the day that is tomorrow comes. Zhuzi yulei 94: 10a.

The centrality of change for Zhu Xi marks a powerful proximity between his philosophy and the process philosophy of Whitehead and his followers. Because the universe is at once in movement and at rest, it was for Zhu essential to develop a philosophy of man that would accomoedate movement and rest. While we will see that he does give a priority to li over qi, to metaphysical form over changing matter and consciousness, nonetheless he does not opt for what is in his eyes a Buddhist preference for tranquillity and stillness, a preference which to him appeared to reduce the world to a void.

5/ Cf for instance the statement where, in specifying that principle exists before physical form (xingershang) and qi after physical form (xingerxia) he notes:

> Fundamentally li and qi cannot be spoken of as prior or posterior. But if we must trace their origin, we are obliged to say that li is prior. However, li is not a separate entity. It exists right in qi. Qithout qi, li would have nothing to adhere to. As qi, there are the Agents (or Elements) of Metal, Wood, Water and Fire. As li there are ren, yi, li, and zhi. Zhuzi daquan 49:1b; Chan 1963: 634.

6/ Lokung, in his essay "Chu Hsi's Theory of Metaphysical Structure", Chan 1986a: 58-78, examines aspects of the similarity between qi and materia; Hatton 1982 brings out the differences between the terms.

7/ Cf Yu, art. cit. Cha 1986a: 85

8/ We saw above, n.3, that something of Dong's difficulty with Tian is preserved in the way Zhu understands Tian, particularly the issue of whether Tian is a moral force that controls the cosmos or whether it is some kind of subordinate principle within the cosmos, a manifestation of qi that is "secondary" to tai'ji and li. The reading that is followed has crucial implications for anthropology, as we shall see.

9/ The way in which we understand Zhu's desire for constancy beyond change is important. Whilst, as we have seen, Zhu stresses the changing aspect of the universe as a never-ending process, he is committed also to the notion that the mind (xin) must establish itself on pure and unchanging principles (chang li) if the process of moral perfection is to be achieved. On the resultant anxiety emerging from the tension between change and constancy (intensified insofar as qi is a positive resistance to constancy), cf Metzger 1977.

10/ That Zhu seems to take li as universals is suggested for instance in the following texts:

> Whenever anything is made, there is in it its own li. For all things which come to be in the universe there is a specific li. Yulei 101.26
>
> How do dried up withered things possess xing (nature?) From the beginning they have had such a li. Thus it is said that there is nothing in the universe that lies beyond xing. Walking down the stps the Master said "The bricks of these steps have their li which belongs to the bricks." Sitting down he said "This bamboo chair has within it the li of bamboo chairs." Yulei 4.6

11/ For a careful reading of the different meanings of qi within Zhu's philosophy, and a statement on its relative incommensurability with any Western terms, cf Kim 1984.

12/ It is in the context of ideas about the difference between the qi of man and the qi of things that the neo-Confucian concept of sagehood - which was a rich and enormously powerful notion, carrying, as we have already indicated, the sense of the individual as cosmic lord - was elaborated. The notion for Zhu Xi was a strongly optimistic one, despite a strong measure of anxiety within it; that anxiety was in part determined by the resistant aspect of qi, in part by the problem of finding a theoretical statement of the fundamental order of things that might allow man a secure place in the cosmos. On this issue Metzger remarks

> Sung Neo-Confucians, therefore, differe from Chou and Han Confucians not only inmaking more explicit the idea of the oneness of heaven and man but also in regarding this oneness as an unsolved problem. Nor is this surprising when one considers the intervening impact of Buddhism. According to Chu Hsi, the Buddhists regarded the realm of concrete experience (or, more precisely, ch'i [the ether of materialization]) as cha-tzu (dregs, worthless leftovers). Chu Hsi charged that this view "broke off and extinguished moral relationships." Whether or not he accurately gauged Buddhism's moral implications, his assessment of its ontological position is sound enough. Metzger 1977:72-3

[Though I would not here follow Metzger's reading of

Buddhism.]

13/ The phrase zhizhi gewu comes, as we have noted, from the Daxue; for further on the Daxue within the context of Zhu's philosophy cf Gardner 1983. Commenting on the process of learning integral to Zhu's concept of self-cultivation Yü Ying-shih remarks that it involves three aspects

> First, a moral attitude of 'seriousness' or 'reverence' must be established and maintained at all times; second, an intellectual activity of ko-wu or chih-chih must be pursued in a spiritual state of 'seriousness' or 'reverence'; third, as a result, 'principles' (li) of things become known. In Chu Hsi's view this operation is an endless, ever ongoing process in the life of every tryly confirmed Confucianist. It is through this spiritual journey that a Confucianist seeks to bring his moral nature to perfection. Thus, taken as a whol, these three aspects constitute a total system of moral practice. But even in such a system of primarily moral character, we find that the rold assigned to knowledge by Chu Hsi is essential even though it is, paradoxically, also secondary at the same time. Yü, "Morality and Knowledge in Chu Hsi's Philosophical System", Chan 1986b:231.

The issue of gewu is taken up at various points in the Jinsi Lu. In one case Cheng Yi's comment is quoted:

> There is principle in everything, and one must investigate principle to the utmost. There are many ways to do this. One way is to read books and elucidate moral principle. Another way is to discuss people and events of the past and present, and to distinguish which are right and which wrong. Still another way is to handle affairs and settle them in the proper way. All these are ways to investigate the principle of things extensively.

14/ For a translation of the Renshuo cf Chan 1963:593-596.

CHAPTER 7 NOTES

1/ There are now various works which consider the development of a concept of mind within the framework of Greek culture. Basic has been Snell 1953, together with Adkins 1970; Bremmer 1983 provides a good recent consideration; Jaynes, 1979, offers a fascinating reading within the context of cultural psychology; a reading of the issues with Plato can be found in Voegelin 1957b.

2/ The framework that is opened in Derrida's inquiry is one whereby Western philosophical traditions are judged to have been dominated, since Plato, by a sense of the priority of mind as the basic resource category for philosophy. The significantly new space now being entered by philosophy - a space which perhaps marks the death of philosophy - is one where mind, interiority and subjectivity have been fractured and dissolved, robbed of their status as simple, originating categories, and of their power as unifying concepts. Partly in the wake of Freud - where the priority of the unconscious over the conscious is a priority of conflict over order and division over unity - and partly in the wake of Saussure - where the idea of language as a play of differences becomes transferred to the mind as a play of differences - Derrida pursues a reading of the human "subject" as permanently broken and divided against itself, as body rather than mind. For a different approach to the eclipse of "mind" cf also Rorty 1980 and Foucault 1970.

3/ Obviously I am wary of such generalisations as applied, for instance, to the whole of Indian (or Chinese) Buddhism. Points of specific reading that would be significant here, for instance, would relate to the status of the world within such an idealist system such as Yogacara. Zhu Xi's criticism of Lu Xiangshan, as of Chan, is in part a criticism of the tendency to view all truth as a given endowment of the mind, thus removing the need for study of traditions and events as a way to come to an understanding of li. Zhu's reading of li as innate material and mental principle is in a sense a reading of the world as a kind of scripture (thus in a sense bearing a Derrida favouring of writing over (inner) speech), but whether Lu Xingshan correlatively read li as "inner word", and whether he subscribed to a metaphor of inner "audition," is not something I have been able to establish.

4/ Other aspects of the understanding of the voice apart, there is a significant contrast between the inner voice as an active resource within the person (and the extension of that notion to cover ideas of God's Spirit as active within the human spirit, and of the divine Logos as the active

power of creation), and Zhu Xi's stress on li as passive and unchanging, radically different in this from the active force of qi.

5/ Compare this with the comments we noted in Chapter 3, regarding Confucius' resistance to the idea of a positive, codified law.

6/ The reading here marks a fairly persistent proximity to structuralist approaches within Derrida's writing; this sits in tension with a Nietzschean approach which would not necessarily abandon a set of structured oppositions, but which would rather seek to read those oppositions in the specificity of their historical determinateness, rather than view them as aspects of a universal schema.

7/ This notion needs to be read with a measure of caution. What I would stress about writing here is its directness as an act of communication. Insofar as Chinese thinkers never believed in a notion of laws of nature (of nature possessed of an internally written structure given to it by Tian, comparable to the way in which in the West the world is the book written by God), then they did not believe in a certain kind of writing: writing as a static structure. If they did believe in writing as active communication, though, then that is continuous with the idea of nature as a constantly active process of birth, of becoming, that we have already noted in different ways as an integral feature of Confucian cosmology. Thus, even though Chen Chan and Zhu Xi speak of "eternal principles" chang li, it is the active manifestation of those principles in qi that is perhaps more central.

8/ It is the separation of worls that I take here to be crucial, though we have already noted that Zhu's system is a form of dualism, and thus that there is a separation active in his thinking (which was also perceived and criticised by later writers in neo-Confucianism, as for instance Lo Chinshun - cf Bloom 1987). We have also seen, however, the difficulty Zhu has in presenting his distinctions between li and qi, whilst also attempting to maintain this unity. To the extent that he does maintain unity, his system can be compared to the advaita vedanta (non-dualism, neither monism nor dualism) of Samkara.

9/ We have noted how, for Confucians, it is an inner-worldly goal of perfection that is sought, rather than transcendence achieved at death, or through death and rebirth. There are strong figurings of a quest for transcendece within later Daoism, however; and we will note below how, in an early text such as the Songs of the South, there are shamanic visions of transcendent flight that approximate Plato's account of the soul ascending to its vision of the Forms.

10/ For a reading of Levinas on repetition and the problem

of metaphysical violence, and for a reading of his contrast between Greek return (the homecoming of Odysseus) and Jewish wandering (of Moses, but also of the diaspora) cf Derrida's essay "Violence and Metaphysics", Derrida 1978: 79 - 153.

11/ Green 1979 carries some valuable comments on the "return of the repressed" within the staging of theatre, and by extension within the literary work; on this, and on the problem of "excess" as a moment of "authenticity" cf Derrida "The Theatre of Cruelty and the Closure of Representation", Derrida 1978: 232:250

12/ Nietzsche begins to develop this notion in The Birth of Tragedy, particularly in relation to Dionysus as the figure governing the conflictual energy in Greek life, and in Greek tragedy.

13/ A reading of the social processes at work in privileging homosexual desire amongst the Greeks can be found in Gouldner, 1967. For a survey of the practices, and reflection on them, cf Dover 1978.

14/ On the religious issues at stake in violence cf Girard 1972.

15/ Again, the implications of this are difficult to determine. There can be a tendency in Western thinking, insofar as it has been informed by the experience of tragic literature, to reckon the only authentic view of life to be a tragic one - life is always conflictual, and the only adequate life is lived in full recognition and acceptance of the sorrow conflict can bring. We have seen how Zhangzi, though, seemed to accept conflict and loss with equanimity and joy; and we have noted the difficulty of locating horror in relation to the vision of Confucius. My own position would be that a tragic stance is a necessary moment preliminary to the kind of ease Zhuangzi focusses. In Chan/Zen this gets marked in an existential passage through death as preliminary to the moment of awakening.

16/ Here Hippolytus has the naive intense single-mindedness of a certain kind of adolescent or saint. His insistence on living only in the light can - pace Nietzsche - be read as Euripides' way of criticising a Greek culture that already gone dangerously too far in revering the rational over the instinctual, Apollo over Dionysus. The summation of Euripides' critique here is in the Bacchae. It can be said of Plato that he philosophises solely in the bright light of the sun, in the fictive world of Apollo (the world of the Forms).

17/ On this cf for instance the following judgement:
> This dialogue consists of a series of elaborately vested reports. Like a Chinese box, it gives us a conversation of Apollodorous with a friend, which

> reports a previous conversation of his own, in which he recalls a speech of Aristodemus, who reports (among others) a speech of Socrates, who reports a speech of Diotima, who reports the secrets of the mysteries. This distancing, continually present to us in the indirect discourse constructions of the Greek, makes us always aware of the fragility of our knowledge of love, our need to grope for understanding of this central element of our lives through hearing and telling stories. Nussbaum, 1986: 168

For a further reading here that draws our the complexity of the dialogue's construction cf Rosen, 1968: 1-38 and passim.

18/ On the most manifest level of the organisation of homosexual desire in Athenian culture, Dover remarks:

> Why the Athenians of the fourth century BC accepted homosexuality so readily and conformed so happily to the homosexual ethos is a question which can be answered instantly at a superficial level: they accepted it because it was acceptable to their fathers and uncles and grandfathers 1978: 2.

On the development of a homosexual culture, as we have already remarked, cf Goldner 1967

19/ Much has been written on the significance of Diotima, and I do not wish to pursue the topic here. All I would say, on the gender issue, is that no significance seems to rest with the fact that Socrates calls on a priestess in order to establish the highest wisdom on eros: here the priestess is a cipher in the male philosophical text, and as such an extension of the persona of Socrates.

20/ For a consideration of how Alcestis might be read from a Christian perspective, in relation to Christian themes of self-sacrifice, cf Markus 1955

21/ Dover 1978 makes it clear that, while the homosexual relationship was prized (particularly from the point of view of the older man), relationships with women were taken as a practical norm. That much said, the ascription of value to female desire was not a feature of Athenian culture (in the way that it had been for instance amongst Sappho and her followers on Lesbos).

22/ We will consider some of the issues surrounding philia in Chapter 9.

23/ The kind of eros that speakers praise is determined very much by their own status as lover or beloved, and by the way in which they lived according to a certain aspect of eros. Dover notes that

Pausanias was a real person whose disposition, we have some reason to think,...was more exclusively homosexual than was common in the Greek world 1978:13

And commenting on the length and fidelity of his love for Agathon he remarks:

> He therefore had a strong personal reason for treating erastai who turn their eros into an enduring relationship as superior to those whose interest in a given eromenos is more transient, and for treating the endurance itself as a justification of the original homosexual relationship. ibid p. 84

We will see this stress on constancy developed in his speech.

24/ While we would note Dover's comment on the strength of Pausanias' homosexual disposition, and thus take it as a factor governing his attitude to women, we would note that the equation here between woman and inconstancy is at no point reversed in the dialogue.

25/ Were we to pursue the considerations here, we would open up a series of questions concerning Plato's relationship with mystery cults, as also his relationship with the wisdom of Egypt, within which we would need to achieve a reading of dietary and ascetic practices as one component in his understanding of the nature and maintenance of bodily health. It should be recognised, though, that any generalised normative conception of "health" is profoundly problematic, as has recently been shown for instance by Foucault.

26/ R.B. Brandt, "The Morality and Rationality of Suicide" in J. Rachels (ed.) Moral Problems (New York, 1975) pp 363-387; quoted Nussbaum 1986: 174.

27/ We will have further to say on self-sufficiency in Chapter 9; it was a central aspect of Greek ethical and social thinking from Homeric times at least. While we have noticed the centrality of self-cultivation in Confucianism, the notion of self-sufficiency (which is carried right through the dialogue here, finding its strongest expression in the speech of Diotima) is completely antithetical to the notion of self-in-community so central to the idea of ren. Even if Plato reworks a concept of community, its presupposition is a radical (self-seeking) individualism.

28/ Again, in comparison, we might note that the problem of chance becomes profoundly central to life once the question of individual desire as the prime motivating factor in life, and towards life's fulfilment, is allowed. For Confucians and neo-Confucians, individual desire, and thus chance, can never figure in this way, since the interlinked dispensation of the world is already given by Heaven, and as destiny (ming) (though there is a proboem of chance associated with one's allotment of qi, as we have seen).

29/ Reintegration and generation, statics and dynamics, being and becoming, self-sufficiency and dependency, would be some of the contrasting categories that might be called

upon to explicate the issues at stake here.

30/ We will return to this point again in Chapter 9, when we will note how "friendship" is in various ways situated as part of the natural order of things.

31/ It would be very instructive to compare the ideas of ascent, the intoxication of beauty, and desire as they occur here with the network of shamanic practices in the Chuci (Songs of the South). A good deal of the imagery there, instead of manifesting a flight from this world to the world of the gods, manifests a process of seduction whereby the gods are wooed from their transcendent realm to the human world. Part of the seductive imagery would be accounted for by the fact that some shamans were women; and the following song (which may have been sung by a man or a woman) gives a very sensual account of spiritual intoxication that would have threatened the foundations of Plato's askesis of eros:

> We have bathed in orchid water and washed our hair with perfumes,
> And dressed ourselves like flowers in embroidered clothing.
>
> The god has halted, swaying above us,
> Shining with a persistent radiance...
>
> The god had just descended in bright majesty,
> When off in a whirl he soared again, far into the clouds.
> He lookes down on Ji-zhou and the lands beyond it;
> There is no place in the world that he does not pass over.
> Thinking of that lord makes me sigh
> And afflicts my heart with a grievous longing
> Yun-zhongjun ("The Lord within the Clouds") Hawkes: 1985: 103-4

Or cf the erotic quest imagery as the shaman sets off in search of his beloved goddess in the song Xiang jun("The Goddess of the Xiang") ibid pp 106-7

32/ Here, as we have already suggested, the highly-wrought artifice of the philosophical dialogue is at signal remove from the conversational style of the Analects, or of Zhu Xi's Yulei.

CHAPTER 8 NOTES

1/ Outka 1972:7. Outka provides the best philosophical reading of agape in the context of New Testament usage; for a full survey of the range and meanings of agape in the New Testament cf Spicq and also Warfield 1918

I do not intend to provide a close reading of Nygren's Agape and Eros here; despite its extensive influence it remains seriously flawed, both at the level of phenomenology and, more importantly, at the level of theoretical analysis. D'Arcy, 1954, provided an early valuable corrective. More extensive and sophisticated readings can now be found in Chydenius 1970 and 1977, and Singer 1984.

3/ Of course, the visions of transcendence focussed around Jesus and Socrates are also both set within the contexts of received normative traditions, and many aspects of those traditions are carried forward on subsequent theorisations of their life and word. What I would note here is that Jesus and Socrates/Plato initiate a radical break with, and re-reading of, the past as part of their overt teaching and self-presentation, in contrast with Confucius who stresses his continuity with the past.

4/ The option of direct, as opposed to mediated access to the command of Heaven seems nowhere to be granted in Confucius. Even with Mencius the process of mediation is given with "the murmurings" of the people. It is of interest here, then, to note that the concern with community, with the people of God, that is given in Hebrew thinking is in a sense not as tightly focussed as is the Confucian sense of community: traditionally in Israel the prophet had stood apart from the community in moments of direct access to the voice of God. Even if, in the post-ptophetic period, the idea of the prophet outside the community had been abandoned in favour of the scribe and lawgiver within the community, the precendent had been established; and it is that precedent that Jesus draws upon and revives in presenting himself as the one in receipt of the Spirit of God.

5/ However those different views are finally read, the fact that Jesus displays an apparently miraculous healing power within his work constitutes a significant difference in comparison with Socrates and Confucius. It opens up a different aspect of the person, insofar as the ability to heal became one of the gifts of the Spirit for the early Church. [In China healing lay with the Daoists, beyond the preserve of scholarly Confucians]. It opens a stress on the body as a locus of the experience of "salvation". And it sets up a tension around the very ideas of health and sickness, the more so when we read Jesus' work in relation to debates about healthy and unhealthy eros in the Symposium.

6/ In one sense, for instance, Confucius studies in order to understand the given ideal foundations of the Zhou community. And we have seen that for Zhu Xi study constitutes an essential and absolutely unavoidable way of coming to understand the basic given principles (tianli) by which the human community and the natural world are formed.

7/ The chief difference in this comparison might be put in terms of a contrast between fulness and emptiness: it is a world empty of any determinate structure, and empty of any determinate principle of self identity, that the enlightened Chan adept finally understands. It is a world governed by a network of formative principles, and a self affirmed as immortal and substantially one with those principles, that Socrates finally understands.

8/ This also emerges in The Song of Songs, where the bride (as the people) is prepared for the love relationship by God's love.

9/ This is particularly manifest in the early stages of John's gospel.

10/ While this is the case, there were nonetheless significant tensions in the ways in which Socrates and Plato read the situation with Athens. For a reading of the crucial issue in Athenian experience - the sense of empire and the sense of history - cf Voegelin 1974: 178-192

11/ I suggested earlier, in order to intensify the question, that it might be considered whether Plato on eros had not covered all that might be said in a discourse on agape. One issue the question of Athens brings up is the possibility of universal love in relation to eros. Certainly the aspect of eros as quest for one's own perfection does not open onto any possibility of universal love, but the vision of to kalon and the return to social life might be read in terms of an other-directed concern. However, "the other" here would seem to be bounded both by the perceived uniqueness of Athens, and by the forms of hierarchy operative in Athenian social life (as also by the received emphasis on the role of self-sufficiency). We can consider the issues here further in chapter nine, in relation to classical ideas of friendship.

12/ For issues on the concept of law here cf for instance Wilson et al. 1954 and Zilsel 1942.

13/ Voegelin gives detailed consideration to the way realised eschatology - as focussed particularly in the death and resurrection of Jesus - was a crucial element in Paul's teaching and in his interpretation of history - cf Voegelin 1974: 134-137 and 239 - 260.

14/ For a fruitful reading of the parables that bring out these points in more detail cf Crossan; and cf also Wilder 1982.

15/ Crossan 1985 brings this point out more fully by examining the narrative traditions within which Jesus' life and sayings came to be set, and by examining the arguments in favour of the canonicity of some gospels rather than others.

16/ For valuable readings here cf Patte 1974, Funk 1974,and Crossan 1974.

17/ Whether Jesus might acknowledge any new law as a system of codification is difficult to establish. Jesus died a young man, perhaps more interested in the radical change his vision implied than in any network of practices that might sustain that vision over generations; or perhaps he saw more sharply than most that the letter of law and codification is always a dead and divisive letter, that in the nature of life it always preserves death, and that it has to be gone against if life is to prevail.

18/ On the issue of growth cf for instance Wilder 1974.

19/ Cf Kristeva 1982

20/ An interesting reading could be generated here on the status of the face in Christianity and Confucianism. For Confucius, the preservation of face with the community, the appropriate affection to rites and behaviour in a publicly observable domain, is of the essence: to turn the other cheek, as Jesus commands it, would (even in the framework of deference presupposed by Confucius) be powerfully damaging to one's status with the community. [It would also imply disrespect for the body the parents had given]. Jesus can perhaps ignore a dispensation of the face because he focusses on the "inner" world of conscience before God.

21/ For further considerations here cf Piper 1979

22/ It is at this point that a quite radical separation between Jewish thinking on the one hand, and Plato and Confucius on the other might open up: Plato favours narcissism, not self-hatred, and Confucius loves self in fidelity to the parents. But in the quotation we noted earlier from the Phaedrus Plato has one part of the soul powerfully subduing the other, in strikingly violent imagery, so that a moment of self-hatred is there in pursuit of an ideal self that is only good. And for Confucius, insofar as the individual is powerfully subservient to the parents there is a strong, but not overt, element of self-abasement.

23/ For further on the significance of Paul's claims here, cf Voegelin 1974: 256-260

24/ I do not wish to follow further here the question of how Jesus perceived his own death: my assumption is that the thought of it as redemptive and self-sacrificial was a thought of the early church rather than of Jesus himself.

25/ Whilst I disagree with the basics of his thinking, I would acknowledge that Hans Urs von Balthasar has done most to bring the aesthetic dimension of New Testament and theological thinking to the fore. Cf his various works listed in the bibliography.

26/ It also raises a point of proximity to the contrast between sudden and gradual enlightenment in Chan Buddhism. The difference would be, though, that Chan practitioners were employing a series of strategies to open and enhance the mind's capacities, and part of the debate surrounds the appropriateness of doing that in a sudden or a cumulative manner. With Paul the notion is that it is a transcendent agency that suddenly opens the mind in a certain way. [Though if we read Paul back into his tradition we can say that his training as a rabbi, and its implicit questioning in his reflection on the stage of Jesus, raised his life to the point of tension and paradox that the Chan masters sought to focus.

27/ Speaking in Paul's case of "the paradox of a reality that moves beyond its structure", Voegelin notes the contrasts between classical Greek philosophy which looked for a structure, an economy of meaning in history, and Paul who looked for a meaning of history (as salvation history) which eventually ruptured and transcended history. Speaking of the specific difference that exists between these two approaches he notes that it falls

> in the classic case, on the cognition of structure and, in the Pauline case, on the exodus from structure. The difference, then, expresses itself in the literary form. In classical philosophy, the reflections on history appear incidental to the analysis of structure. Aristotle wrote an Ethics and Politics; he did not write an Historics. With Paul, the history of faith dominates the Letter to the Romans, while the reflections on personal and political conduct in the short present before the Parousia are appended in Chapters 12-15. The classic meaning in history can be opposed by Paul with a meaning of history, because he knows the end of the story in the transfiguration that begins with the Resurrection. Voegelin 1974: 258

28/ For some of the issues involved here cf Voegelin 1956.

29/ To develop the issues fully here would involve a detailed excursus in the philosophy of history. Voegelin 1974 passim considers various of the issues, and cf also Cairns 1963.

30/ Some comments are perhaps appropriate here. In Hebrew experience time and history are privileged over place as the locus of God's presence; in Blanchot;s phrase, it is time itself "which is truly the Promised Land":

> What is demanded of Abraham is not only that he sacrifices his son, but God himself. The son is God's future on earth, for it is time which is truly the Promised Land - the true, the only dwelling place of the chosen people and

> of God in his people. Yet Abraham, by sacrificing his only son, must sacrifice time and time sacrificed will certainly not be given back in the eternal beyond. The beyond is nothing other than the future, the future of God in time.
> Blanchot 1982: 61.

Here, if the son is the future, is God in time, then for Confucius the father constitutes the future already achieved in the past - time for Confucius is a static, recapitulative process, rather than the dynamic process of the Hebrew scriptures, and the parallel questions (whether to sacrifice the son in obedience to God, whether to sacrifice the father in obedience to the moral will of Tian) open up some of the differences in the way in which time was considered.

31/ The various themes concerning the vision of nature within Christian thought are well explored in Glacken 1967.

CHAPTER 9 NOTES

1/ S.Th. 2a 2ae. We enter here, in the consideration of friendship, onto a topic which we have already seen to be of negligible significance in Chinese philosophical thinking. For Western traditions, in their derivation from Greek, Rome and Christian sources, friendship is a major issue of concern and reflection. Not only is it viewed as a cetnral aspect of relations between persons, it is also in a theological frame considered central to relations between man and God.

2/ In the de Caritate Aquinas also opens the question of friendship with God:

> Moreover, charity is a certain friendship of man to God. But friendship to man is not included by philosophers among the political virtues. Therefore the love of God ought not to be numbered among the theological virtues. 2,8.
> Moreover, according to the Philosophers in Book VIII of the Ethic, friendship consists in a certain equality. But there is the greatest inequality between God and us, as between beings who are infinitely separated. Therefore there can be no friendship of God for us, or of us for God. So charity, which designates friendship of this kind, does not seem to be a virtue. 2.15

In the de Caritate Aquinas proceeds in a similar way to that followed in S. Th. - the issue of friendship is problematised first, then resolved, and the quotations here mark its first questioning.

3/ The issue here in favour of final transcendent perfection as opposed to world-immanent perfection is, as we have already noticed, a central contrasting feature between Aquinas and Zhu Xi, as it is between Christianity and Confucianism in general. Partly involved here also is the issue of existential anxiety regarding perfection. This issue, crucial for Zhu Xi, seems paradoxically to be less central for Aquinas, though it could perhaps be argued that a doctrine of original sin, and a belief in active demonic power, rendered the universe more unstable for Aquinas than it was for Zhu Xi. Aquinas' universe, however, is an already redeemed universe, and despite the negative tow of sin the notions of salvation and eternal flourishing constituted deeply optimistic moments in his thinking.

4/ Thus in the de Caritate he remarks:

> it must be said that caritas is not a virtue of man considered as man, but of man considered as becoming, through participation in grace, like to God and the Son of God, according to which it is written (Jn. 3.1) "Behold what manner of charity the Father hath

> bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and should be the sons of God.' 2 ad 15

5/ On the notion of unity and interconnectedness expressed in terms of the common good (we will say more on the common good below) Aquinas remarks:

> certain gratuitous virtues, which are infused, are necessary for man when he is enrolled in the heavenly state; for the proper generation of these virtues there is required the love of the common good for the whole society, which is the divine good considered as the object of beatitude...to love that good for its own sake in order that it might remain and be made wide-spread, and that nothing might act against that good, this does dispose man well towards that society of the blessed. This is caritas, which loves God for His own sake, and loves fellow-men who are capable of attaining beatitude as it loves itself. De Caritate 2. resp.

6/ For Greek ideas of friendship I have drawn here on Adkins 1963 and Herman 1987.

7/ Plato's example of friendship for wine occurs in the Phaedrus.

8/ There is perhaps a possible comparison here between a teleological perfection of relationships in culture (culture as a perfection of nature) as this is viewed by Aristotle, and a similar perfection of nature through culture in early Chinese reflections. I am thinking here of that aspect of the contrast between ren and min that we noted in chapter 2, whereby the min were associated with sheng, rawness, birth, origins, nature, and the ren were a cultured, perfected, and differentiated group that were either separate from the min (thus enjoying the identities of clan identity) or else continuous with the min as the leaders of the clan as a whole.

9/ This Greek concept of self-sufficiency, which we have already noticed with Plato, is significantly different from the emphases on community in both Confucian and Judaic thinking. For Confucius, I take it that some steps toward praising self-sufficiency constituted an aspect of the thinking around ren in the Shijing, where the singular heroic individual was central, and that the discourse on ren in the Analects is a deliberate move to undercut self-sufficiency and to elevate communality as a primary value.

10/ It would be of interest to pursue a reading of Aristotle on hedone and Confucius on yue (music, but also pleasure). There is a common aristocratic assumption to Aristotle and Confucius that the pleasures of a richly civilised life are of particular value, as a means to and token of cultured interpersonal relations.

11/ This ties in also with the predominant stress on active desire that we have already encountered with the analyses of eros in the Symposium. At the same time the stress on the active element reduces the possibility of affectionate friendship as a simple sharing. Indeed, reflection on friendship today might well choose to dismiss the active element as an avoidance of friendship, as with the person who is always "doing things" for his or her friends. By contrast with Aristotle, the Christian handling of friendship - insofar as its premiss is an original receptivity to God and others - stresses the non-active element, though not solely or consistently, as we shall see.

12/ For the best treatment of the development of the terminology on love within early Christian thinking, cf Petre 1948.

13/ Its basis is there in the early Confucian emphasis on graded love, starting from the family, in contrast with the Mohist idea of universal love without distinctness. Its clearest statement is perhaps in the Daxue, and through this text it became a central theoretic notion for Zhu Xi. Cf for instance the identification of the way in which virtue is extended:

> When the mind is rectified, the personal life is cultivated; when the personal life is cultivated, the family will be regulated; when the family is regulated, the state will be in order; and when the state is in order, there will be peace throughout the world.
> Chan 1963: 86-7

14/ For a consideration of the bakcground here cf Bugge, 1975. He notes for instance:

> the evidence suggests that the notion of a sexless state of existence is the very leaven of monastic thought, and therefore a principle upon whose viability as a spiritual ideal the development of the institution has largely depended p.2.

And speaking of the millenarian aspect to monasticism he remarks:

> The millenium was to return men to the State of uncontaminated spirituality free of the taint of matter, a state of virginity...man's practice of virginity in this life not only participates, but actively hastens, the cosmic process of return to asexuality...Medieval monastic literature is shot through with the idea that the monk in his cloister leads a life that is essentially an anticipation of the angelic life of heaven. The notion prevails from the earliest days of Egyptian monasticism down to the twelfth century and beyond pp 31-2.

The conflict on monasticism in China was a conflict between the Confucan duty to preserve the family and the Buddhist

desire to abandon it. Zhu Xi was a man married with children, and his stress on family virtue marks perhaps his point of furthest remove in thinking and concern from the celibate life-world of Aquinas, with its implicit vision of a sexless, asexual perfection.

15/ For surveys of developments of ideas of love from the earl period of christianity through to the medieval period cf Chydenius 1970 and 1977, and Singer 1984.

16/ Within this motif, as we have already indicated, the denial of sexuality in order to achieve a union of love with God was a central consideration. Bugge speaks of the interpretation of the Song of Songs in terms of the soul's aspect to and union with god as a form of Christian gnosis within which the overtly erotic imagery of the Song is transposed:

> Generally speaking, those exegetes of the Song whose views on the role of sexuality in man's original nature mark them as "Christian gnostics" are in substantial agreement on its significance: it represents for them a spiritual, and finally ontological, union between the soul of the individual Christian and a unifying Christ...Christian gnosis believed union with the divine was possible only through the release of man's genuine spiritual being from its material bonds; but the most resistant of these was precisely the desire for sexual intercourse. How was it possible for Christian gnosis to embrace the metaphysical language of a condemned sexuality to describe the union the soul seeks with God? The answer lies in the rigorous dualism of all gnostic belief, according to which only the union of spirit with matter is evil, because it involves contamination or defilement; the union of spirit with spirit is entirely praiseworthy. Bugge, 1975: 63

17/ More extensively,Augustine notes:

> When a man's resolve is to love God, and to love his neighbour as himself, not according to man's standards but according to God's, he is undoubtedly said to be a man of goodwill because of this love. This attitued is more commonly called charity (caritas) in holy Scripture; but it appears in the same sacred writings under the apellation love (amor)....The reason why I thought I should mention this is that quite a number of people imagine that fondness (dilectio) and charity are something different from love. They say, in fact, that fondness should be taken in a good sense, love in a bad sense. It is however well established that this was not the usage even of authors of secular literature. But the philosophers will have to decide whether they make this distinction, and on what

principle. Certainly their books are sufficient evidence of the high value that they place on love, when it is concerned with good things and directed towards God himself. My task, however, was to make the point that the Scriptures of our religion, whose authority we rank above all other writings, do not distinguish between love and fondness or charity. For I have shown that love is also used in a good sense. cf Bettenson tr. pp.556-7.

18/ Chydenius 1970 lists the following distinguishing features of the physical conception of love:
a/ the idea that love is one, with no distinction between eros and agape, or between amor, diletio and caritas;
b/ the idea that love is self-centred desire;
c/ the idea that there is an opposition between material and spiritual worlds, and between carnal and spiritual love;
d/ the idea that the universe constitutes a single continuous hierarchy, and that this hierarchy constitutes a ladder of ascent for the soul;
e/ the idea that, when the soul rises in ascent, it is guided by a symbolism of the love objects.
For further on the physical conception cf also Simonin 1931.
We might note here a contrast between a "vertical" imagery of ascent (present also in Plato, and in large measure derived from him in Christian thinking) which implies two or more levels in the universe, and a process of perfection as departure from the lower to the upper; and a "horizontal" imagery of extension, which views the (social) world as a series of ever-widening concentric circles, and a process of perfection as the broadening of affective and moral dispositions to encompass those situated as a distance (we have seen this with Confucians, and with Cicero).

19/ For a survey of developments in the twelfth-century world cf Chenu 1968. Although dated in parts now, there remains much of value in H.O. Taylor's (1911) study of medieval thought and emotion. And cf also Vossler 1958.

20/ Chydenius 1970 notes, in commenting on Abelard, that aspects of the ecstatic conception of love imply a vision of the lover moving out of himself, and that this is worked out in terms of
1/ a distinction between eros and philia
2/ a rejection of eros
3/ an analogy between philia and agape.
In Abelard's case the rejection of eros was pronounced, insofar as in his early life he was famous as a writer of love songs and poems, and insofar as his initial relationship Heloise (prior to his violent castration by Heliose's family) was dominated by eros.

21/ The factors involved here, in the links between Cistercian love-literature and the secular love-literature of the time, are well considered in Leclercq 1979.

22/ The proximity to Aristotle's rooting of philia in phusis is thus marked, though in consequence of a Christian vision of nature as a divine creation, and with an implicit doctrine of analogy, Aelred is able to find traces (vestigia) of friendship even in inanimate nature. We find this tendency even more pronounced with Aquinas.

23/ In his commentary on the Song of Songs Bernard carried the love-mysticism of the earlier monastic tradition to a new point of intensity, developing the notion of the (male) soul as the bride of Christ, and speaking of the union of the soul with Christ as a form of intercourse:

> It is when the soul is ravished by the Word's unutterable sweetness that she is thus stolen by Him from herself, as it were, in order that she may enjoy Him...And truly the mother is happy in her offspring; but the Bride in the arms of her Spouse is happier still. Dear indeed are the children, the pledges of His love; but she prefers His kisses...Sweet intercourse it is, but brief and rare.
> On the Song of Songs p 266.

Aspects of Bernard's thinking are taken up by Aelred here, where it is the souls of two (male spiritual) lovers together that ascend to a relationship of union with Christ.

24/ For readings of Aquinas on love in general cf for instance Simonin 1931 and Diggs; and for a good account of the structure of Aquinas' philosophy cf Jordan 1986 and Aertsen 1988.

25/ On love as a natural tendency manifest in all creation (and spoken of under a variety of terms such as appetitus, desiderium, inclinatio) cf for instance S. Th. 1. 60. 1; 1.19.1; 1.78.1; De. Ver 23.1. I will say more on appetitus below.

26/ Though there are moments when it nearly manifest itself; cf below.

27/ There is an implicit agreement with Zhu Xi here, although for Zhu's world the contrasting issue of an ecstatic kind of love that spelled a loss of self in God was not a consideration. However, Buddhist ideas on wuxin, no-self, did constitute an important object of critique for Zhu, and insofar as the presumed a theory and a practice of loss of (a certain) self then they were discussed on grounds similar to those on which Aquinas dismissed ecstatic conceptions of love: they robbed the individual of a given identity and nature, and denied that the individual was rooted in the given order of things. For Aquinas and Zhu Xi such rooting is crucial. One difference between

them would be that, while the point is equally emphasised by each, it is more fully theorised by Aquinas insofar as his natural philosophy and metaphysics of nature constitutes a larger part of his writing than does Zhu's.

28/ A very good reading of the Platonism in Aquinas can be found in Fabro 1970 and 1974.

29/ We have already noted this motif in Levinas 1979, insofar as it is the focus of critique by Derrida in his essay "Violence and Metaphysics." We should note that Levinas is close to the ecstatic coneption of love insofar as he stresses a relationship with the other which is premissed on freedom and difference rather than identity, though he is against any notion of a final absorption in the other in love.
Zhu Xi's sense of metaphysical movement is similar to that of Aquinas insofar as Zhu has a process of anamnesis whereby the individual has to return to his ontological roots in order to discover and live his true identity; Zhu differs from Aquinas in that the return is purely inner-worldly, rather than to an original transcendent source that is also known as a final destiny, patria.

30/ Appetitus naturalis as a given tendency to act in a certain way would compare with the distribution of yang qi in Zhu Xi's thinking. One difference would be that for Aquinas appetitus naturalis is an aspect of metaphysical structure, whereas for Zhu yang qi is an aspect of psychophysical material.

31/ It is here, in terms of a theological and Christological account of caritas, that the widest point of departure between Aquinas and Zhu Xi actually emerges. Aquinas' world-drama, insofar as it passes through the stages of creation, fall, and redemption, has as its central presupposition the notion of an actively-engaged God - and it is God who assists the process of perfection in caritas. For Zhu, without a theology of a personal God and of divine grace, the stress is on the individual's work to perfect himself.

CHAPTER 10 NOTES

1/ I am grateful to T. Engström for this quotation, which is taken from Dewey's essay on Emerson.

2/ The shift from the idea of the book to the idea of the text constitutes one of the main moves in post-structuralist literary criticism, though it is prefigured in the experiments with writing conducted since Mallarmé. Involved here equally is a style of writing and a style of reading, together with a shift from an emphasis on the author and authorities intention to a stress on writing as possessed of many (often conflicting and contradictory) meanings and intentions. The psychoanalytic aspect to the new centrality of the text is that, where the person is now involved more in terms of unconscious (and conflicting) motivations and aspirations, regressions and evasions, so the text is now read (often directely on the basis of psychoanalytic theory) as a play of contradictions and repressions, rather than as a unified entity governed by a single meaning. For some of the issues here cf for instance Elizabeth Wright, 1984, Harari 1979 (particularly Foucault's essay "What is an Author?" pp 141 - 160), and M.C. Taylor 1986.

3/ Derrida is the writer who has done most to render any relation with tradition extremely problematic, particularly through the complexity of readings offered in Glas. That Derrida remains too clearly involved with tradition, however, is an issue for some - cf for instance Rorty 1982.

4/ Or from no foundations at all: one of the issues in recent critiques of foundationalism is that foundations are always already provided, that one always lives within a continuous fabric of textuality and that the attempt to step beyond it towards some ultimate foundation is an illusion - though it was a powerfully effective illusion for various forms of modernist thinking, whether for instance in Husserl's attempt to find a pure ground of subjectivity, or in Artaud's attempt to find a pure and original body beyond the defilements of language. The power of Derrida's reading on issues here is its ability to go with the desire for foundations, whilst at the same time showing the impossibility of any foundationalist project. For a reading of these themes in modernism, particularly in relation to a modernist sense of crisis, and for a critique of some of their presuppositions cf Rose 1984.

5/ This is not just an issue of editorial policy, but rather, and more fundamentally, an issue of an agreed philosophical curriculum.

6/ The charge has frequently been made against Derrida that his writing is idealist - a charge further vindicated for some in that his long promised engagement with the texts of Marxism has not materialised. From our viewpoint here, it does not matter in one sense how Derrida is placed, since the question concerning the point and value of reading the past is as much a question for a materialist as an idealist reading, insofar as implicit in it is the further question, why not abandon the past altogether?

7/ The functions of secrecy and concealment are for Steiner central features of any literary and artistic work - the theme is worked out, for instance, in Steiner 1977.

8/ For an extended consideration here cf Rorty 1980: 315ff. In identifying what he considers to be one of the prime mistaken ideas which have governed Western philosophical inquiry Rorty remarks:

> The difficulty stems from a notion shared by Platonists, Kantians, and positivists: that man has an essence - namely, to discover essences. The notion that our chief task is to mirror accurately, in our own Glassy Essence, the universe around us is the complement of the notion, common to Democritus and Descartes, that the universe is made up of very simple, clearly and distinctly knowable things, knowledge of whose essences provides the master-vocabulary which permits commensuration of all discourses. p. 357

Shifting from this perception (though retaining aspects of the hermeneutic approach of Gadamer) Rorty argues for a new style of philosophising which he calls "edification":

> The attempt to edify (ourselves or others) may consist in the hermeneutic activity of making connections between our own culture and some exotic culture or historical period, or between our own discipline and another discipline which seems to pursue incommensurable aims in an incommensurable vocabulary. But it may instead consist in the "poetic" activity of thinking up such new aims, new words, or new disciplines, followed by, so to speak, the inverse of hermeneutics: the attempt to reinterpret our familiar surroundings in the unfamiliar terms of our new inventions. In either case, the activity is (despite the etymological relation between the two words) edifying without being constructive - at least if "constructive" means the sort of cooperation in the accomplishment of research programs which takes place in normal discourse. For edifying discourse is supposed to be abnormal, to take us out of our old selves by the powers of strangeness, to aid us in becoming new beings. p. 360

9/ The theme of "poisonous pedagogy" is developed in Miller 1987 in particular, and also in Miller 1985.

Miller's basic, and disturbingly well-documented, thesis is that all traditional forms of child-rearing have been geared to securing conformity and obedience, to meeting the needs and security of the parents rather than the child. The same point can be made about university curricula, particularly in humanities subjects which have often been dominated by a simple presumption of the value of tradition, and of the importance of historical forms of inquiry as access to "the tradition."

10/ To my knowledge Mackie 1984 constitutes the philosophically most astute survey of, and rejection of, arguments for theism that has been produced by a contemporary philosopher.

11/ While I would read the production as a sign of Brook's own post-modernism, it does also open the point that, in its concept of play, lila, Hindu thinking has already approximated an aspect of writing and production that has become central to Derrida and deconstruction (just as there is a proximity, on similar grounds, between Derrida and Zhuagnzi). The difference would be that for Hinduism it is the gods that play, whereas for Derrida it is man alone.

12/ Thus Needham identifies the presuppositions governing science and civilisation in China with the following words:

> Throughout this series of volumes it has been assumed all along that there is only one unitary science of Nature, approached more or less closely, built up more or less successfully and continuously, by various groups of mankind from time to time. This means that one can expect to trace an absolute continuity between the first beginnings of astronomy and medicine in Ancient Babylon, through the advancing natural knowledge of medieval China, India, Islam, and the classical Western world, to the break-through of late Renaissance Europe when, as has been said, the most effective method of discovery was itself discovered. Needham 1974: xxi.

Needham's approach has been strongly criticised by Nathan Sivin, as Needham himself acknowledges ibid p. xxii-xxiii & cf Sivin 1968: 2, and 5.

APPENDIX TWO

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